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JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

Obvious and superficial things do not interest the author of this book. He has made an effort to see below the surface and really understand the life, the literature and all the beauty of Japan, and he presents his findings here in chapters on the Japanese theater, the Nō plays and modern drama, on temples and pilgrims, on festival ceremonies, on modern Japanese literature, on cormorant fishing, pearl culture, wrestling matches, the training and the rôle of the geisha, and many other aspects of Japanese life. His penetration and his sympathetic humor add much to the distinction of his book.



IN SILHOUETTE

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

By TROWBRIDGE HALL

Author of Californian Trails and Spain in Silhouette

NEW YORK
THE MACMILLAN COMPANY
1925

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Set up and electrotyped
Published November, 1925

*Printed in the
United States of America*

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FOREWORD

It was a freak of fortune—good or bad, as you will—that the author landed in San Francisco a few days before the great earthquake of September, 1923.

For a time it was a matter of conjecture how much of the material gathered for this book would be of use. Then came the detailed reports which made certain the fact that very few changes were to be found in those places which were in the author's mind to describe. In the essentials, the scenes are still as pictured, and the book is sent forth for those pilgrims to whom the beaten path holds not all the attractions of a journey, but who see in the less obvious signs and symbols the true picture of a people and its country.

T. H.

NEW YORK

March

1925

61393

CONTENTS

I.	TŌKYŌ	1	<i>Of cherry blossoms—Of the Emperor's palace—Of Emperor worship—Of the Imperial Hotel—Of the Forty-seven Ronin—Of the temple of Sengaku-ji—Of General Nogi—Of the Furisode Fire—Of the city</i>
II.	THE GEISHA	36	<i>Of the "Maple-leaf dance"—Of the geisha's training—Of her place in the social order—Of her rôle as arbiter of fashion—Of her tragedy</i>
III.	THE OIRAN	50	<i>Of the Yoshiwara—Of a symbolic dance</i>
IV.	THE THEATER	61	<i>Of Ōkuni, the first Japanese actress—Of Kikunojo, the famous man-actress—Of the Japanese theater—Of a tragedy—Of a mystic pantomime—Of a melodrama—Of a comedy</i>
V.	ALONG THE PILGRIM WAY	79	<i>Of Prince Ito's tomb—Of a pilgrim—Of the Tōkaidō—Of the temple of Honmon-ji—Of the temple of Kōbō Daishi—Of Buddhism</i>
VI.	TO FUJIYAMA	95	<i>Of flowered Kamata—Of Commodore Perry's visit—Of Yokohama—Of Kamakura and Daibutsu—Of a haunted temple—Of Enoshima and the Goddess Benten—Of a temple to the Rain-god—Of a temple in Oiso—Of hot springs—Of Hakone—Of Fugi-san</i>

CONTENTS

VII.	TO THE HILL OF PEACE	116
	<i>Of suicide—Of Gotemba and the Soga vendetta—Of the leper hospital—Of the Sano Bakuen—Of railroad travel—Of “Mio-no-Matsubara” and the legend of the fisherman—Of tea—Of the Hill of Peace, the tea ceremony, and Rikyū—Of Hideyoshi</i>	
VIII.	NAGOYA	137
	<i>Of Iéyasu's castle—Of the sacred sword and the shrine of Atsuta—Of Gifu—Of cormorant fishing—Of “Yōrō,” a Nō play—Of the Kwanze Society—Of “Sumidagawa,” a Nō dance—Of Lake Biwa and the legend of Hidesato and the Centipede</i>	
IX.	KYŌTO	163
	<i>Of Old World Courtesy—Of Buddha's Birthday Festival—Of the “Tayu Dochū”—Of the Festival of Inari—Of the Feast of Blossoms—Of the “Miyako-Odorī”—Of Oriental music—Of Buddhist temples—Of Buddhist priests in legend—Of temple gardens—Of Arashi-yama—Of the river banks</i>	
X.	TO THE TEMPLE OF ISE	190
	<i>Of the Battle of the Fireflies at Uji—Of Nara—Of Hokkei-ji—Of “Hitome Sombon—Of Akogi and pearl culture—Of the Holy City of Ise—Of the temple</i>	
XI.	FROM ŌSAKA TO KŌBE	211
	<i>Of Kōya-san, Jizō, and Kōbō Daishi—Of socialism—Of the temple of Tennō-ji—Of the temple of Daichō-ji and the legend of Gompachi and Komurasaki—Of</i>	

CONTENTS

	<i>Dōtombori, the Street of Forgetfulness and a Western cinema—Of a wrestling match—Of the Eta—Of Kōbe's slums and of Kagawa</i>	
XII.	MODERN LITERATURE	242
	<i>Of Mushakōji and "Atoni Kitaru Mono"—Of the new school of realism—Of "Han's Crime," a book by Naoya Shiga—Of Takeo Arishima</i>	
XIII.	SHIKOKU	259
	<i>Of the Moon—Of the Inland Sea—Of Awaji—Of Shikoku—Of old customs—Of the farmer and his toil—Of marriage customs—Of pilgrims to Buddhist shrines—Of native inns—Of Miyajima—Of a Buddhist shrine</i>	
XIV.	KYŪSHŪ	290
	<i>Of Beppu—Of bathing customs—Of Yabakei—Of Kurume and the visit of the Princess Nagako—Of Aso-san—Of early Christian martyrs</i>	
XV.	OVER THE SAN-INDŌ	304
	<i>Of the road—Of epidemics and of patent medicines—Of superstitions and of the Feast of Lanterns—Of secondary education—Of the education of girls—Of a code of ethics—Of fish and fishing—Of the shrine of Izumo—Of Matsue and Lafcadio Hearn—Of a funeral</i>	
XVI.	NIKKŌ	330
	<i>Of cascades and the Red Bridge—Of mausolea—Of Yōmei Mon—Of native customs—Of the Earthquake—"Sayonara!"</i>	

ILLUSTRATIONS

- IN SILHOUETTE, *Frontispiece*
IN A PARK IN Tōkyō, 3
ENTRANCE TO SHINTŌ TEMPLE GROUNDS, 16
AN AVENUE LEADING TO A TEMPLE, 25
A PRIVATE GARDEN IN Tōkyō, 33
AFTER THE RAIN, 42
AN OIRAN WITH HER ATTENDANTS, 55
SCENE FROM AN ANCIENT TRAGEDY, 67
PIGEONS OF HOMMON-JI TEMPLE, 85
WITHIN A TEMPLE GARDEN, 91
THE DAIBUTSU BUDDHA, 101
UNDER THE SHADOW OF FUJI-SAN, 108
THE WITCHERY OF FUJI, 115
A DUET, 129
A Nō DANCE, 146
LAKE BIWA, 157
THE HIGHWAY OUTSIDE KYŌTO, 162
THE PATH TO KIYOMIDZU, 177
A TEMPLE GARDEN, 184
TEA SHEDS ALONG THE RIVER BANK, 187
IN NARA PARK, 197
THE BUDDHIST GOD JIZŌ, 213
THE TEMPLE BELL OF TENNŌ-JI, 220
HARBOR SCENE IN KŌBE, 239
WHERE SNOW LIES DEEP, 255
AFTER THE DAY'S WORK, 268
A FLOWER GIRL, 279
LAKE MIYAJIMA, 286
IN THE EARLY MORNING, 318
SORTING FISH FOR MARKET, 321
KEGON WATERFALL AT NIKKŌ, 332
THE GATE OF YŌMEI MON, 337

JAPAN
IN
SILHOUETTE

*Aki kaze ya
Hai ki yoko to
Nami ban ri.*

A book of voyage for thee,
Blown by the autumn breezes o'er
Ten thousand miles of sea.

I

T Ō K Y Ō

Hana wo yaru sakura ya yume no uki yo mono.

This life is but a dream, o'er which the cherries
blossoming cast their enchanting gleam.

AUTOMOBILES pause in their reckless onrush; the clatter of hurrying *geta* is stilled; and even the shoo-shoo of *tabi*-clad 'rickisha men dies away where the "cherries blossoming cast their enchanting gleam."

It is April in Tōkyō, and even in aristocratic little Hibiya Park, centering Japan's greatest city, the driveways are thickly bordered with the pinkish-white petals that have fluttered to earth like so many flakes of snow. In drifts they lie, faintly flushed, as if sun-tinted. Hibiya's evergreens are the perfect background for this embroidery of blooms that swathe the dusky branches in pink-tinged clouds.

East and west, north and south, wherever these bowers of blossoms can be seen, there is a worshipping people, feasting its eyes on the tempting repast provided by Nature.

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

The Oriental poet likens the snowy-white petals to a veil donned for the trees' nuptials with Spring. Later, when the petals fall to earth, they are as a winding-sheet, the symbol of the impermanency of earthly beauty; or, it may be, the spirit of the samurai, who prefers death to an ignominious life.

Upon even the humblest of Japanese has been bestowed a love of flowers so great that it is one of their most distinctive characteristics. It is claimed that a criminal on his way to execution will beg for permission to stop long enough to buy a flower, which is crushed against his face as he nears the executioner. Give a child its choice between a toy and a cherry spray, and he invariably takes the blossom. Wounded soldiers, convalescing at home, instinctively prefer cherry blossoms to cigarettes. "Honorably, be kind enough to bring me a flower," is their entreaty.

During the war with Russia, when battalion after battalion was making a fierce assault upon the hills of Port Arthur, and the great guns of the citadel were pouring shells over the field of advance, it was told with pride how a soldier, toiling upward, amid the blinding fire of bursting shells and the shriek of shrapnel, touched



IN A PARK IN TŌKYŌ

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

by some far-away memory, stooped and picked a solitary flower growing in his path—and stumbled on to death.

This love of nature is almost, if not actually, a religion in Japan. The first blossom is regarded with solemn and inspiring reverence; its unfolding is watched as one would watch the revelation of the infinite mysteries of a soul. Indeed, both Shintoism and Buddhism are intimately associated with some beauty of nature that breathes religious inspiration—the reflection of autumn tints on the water; the sparkling of fireflies on summer nights; a feathery cascade; a snowy peak; or the blossoming of flowers. Even the very temples are more famous for flowering groves than for their gods.

Japan can never be understood, even partially, without a sympathetic comprehension of this profound worship of Nature, and sympathy is limited only by understanding.



Through the northern gate of Hibiya Park pours a kaleidoscopic human stream, the flotsam and jetsam of a big city, spreading in a swirl of conflicting currents over the wide campus

TŌKYŌ

that stretches in front of Tōkyō's sole mediæval survival.

The same deep moats, the same massive walls and turf-clad ramparts that encircled the castle of the Shōguns for hundreds of years, still surround the palace of the Emperor. They have lost neither their impressive grandeur nor the charm distilled by time. The defense of ancient Yedo, present-day Tōkyō has built herself around them. Into the still waters, now sunned with a thousand changing lights, is mirrored the weird beauty of low-reaching pines that overhang the honored moats. From high gray-bouldered walls their lean, tormented arms drop slender needles in perpetual green rain, for sudden swarms of greedy minnows, that grab at the worm-like bait.

At the twilight hour, when a brilliant sunset streaks the sky with saffron and gold, even greater witchery is abroad. Then all unloveliness is forgotten. The neighboring red brick atrocities, shadowed by approaching darkness, assume lines of beauty, and even the mongrel character of the common people fades into forgetfulness. During that brief moment the spirit of Tōkyō seems to hover above the Imperial Palace, still jealously guarded against all

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

intrusion, and it becomes more than ever mysterious, with its ponderous towered gateways, banded by iron and studded with huge knobs of chiseled metal.



Notwithstanding the tremendous changes that have taken place in the life and thought of the people, the Emperor is cherished in the hearts of the great majority, not merely as a reigning sovereign, but as the vicegerent on earth of the gods in heaven. He is vested with their divine attributes of love and all-seeing wisdom.

Undoubtedly the last Emperor, Meiji Tennō, believed in his own divinity, but the present Emperor, Yoshihito, has shown throughout his short reign strong human democratic tendencies; and the Prince Regent, Hirohito, is so progressive that as lately as 1921 he broke the convention of centuries by leaving his native country for a tour of Europe—the first ruler since the beginning of time so to violate tradition. The act astonished the simple-hearted peasantry, and notwithstanding their belief that the Imperial family, being gods, can do no unwise thing, many were fearful of coming harm.

TŌKYŌ

One fanatic, in anxious protest, threw himself before the royal train and was killed.

At the time of the restoration (1868) the Emperor, when going beyond the palace walls, was carried by palanquin, in which he was screened from all spectators. The streets were cleared of everything that might offend his sight; the upper windows of every house were closed so that none could look down upon him; and even fires were put out, lest the sky should be obscured. All persons humbly prostrated themselves on the ground as he passed, not daring to lift their eyes even to the level of the palanquin.

Today the present Emperor shows himself freely and unostentatiously, taking part in various functions and ceremonies, where he may be seen by all. Yet the old custom prevails of human eyes never looking down upon divinity, and upper windows and balconies are empty on the occasion of the formal passing of members of the royal family. Even tourists in foreign hotels are expected to conform to this custom.

Loud applause in the presence of the Emperor is considered as grave an offense as the clapping of hands would be in one of our cathe-

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

drals or churches on the elevation of the Host. The replica of the Emperor's face upon stamps or coins, so usual a custom in Europe, is as impossible in Japan as with us would be the use of the head of the Savior for a like purpose. His photograph, though on sale, is always covered. His painted portrait, placed on view in schools, upon national holidays, is reverently brought from some place of storage and hung, curtained, until the children are all in respectful attitude. Then, and not till then, are the curtains withdrawn and the children allowed to gaze upon the countenance of the Son of Heaven.

In case of fire this portrait of the Emperor must be saved at any cost. The story is told of a pupil in a burning school, who rushed through the flames into the principal's room, where the sacred portrait had been placed for safe keeping, only to find it hopelessly heavy. Cutting the picture from its frame, he rolled it tightly in his kimono, made a slash in his abdomen, thrust within the wound the precious roll, and staggered back into the fiery furnace. Among the smoking embers was found a half-consumed corpse, but within it reposed the honored treasure, uninjured by fire.

TŌKYŌ

So profound is this worship of the Emperor that even his name is held sacred in ordinary conversation, and Mutsuhito—"Gentle Pity"—in the perspective of history will probably rank as Japan's greatest ruler, the man who is responsible for the regeneration of his Empire, for all great reforms and nearly all of modern progress. His reign is known as Meiji—"Enlightened Government." His son, the present Emperor, is Yoshihito, called, as is the Japanese custom, from the name of his reign, "Taisho," the significance of which is "Great Righteousness."



Startling contradictions, vivid contrasts, sharp inconsistencies, await around every corner. Assuredly this is no new Japan, but just old Japan—the old body in new garments, while the soul of things remains unchanged.

Look within that bizarre structure, the Imperial Hotel. By admirers it is called "a foreign expression on Japanese soil"; to which detractors reply that its expression would be foreign on any soil. It is the gathering-place of New Japan, the center of English afternoon

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

tea and American jazz—but Old Japan is also present. A bewildering nightmare the structure looks, until you awaken to the realization that it is only unusual, which, of course, is a crime in any country—and here in Japan the builders have paid the penalty of being considered mad. But look again, and your eyes become accustomed to the seeming eccentricity, and at length you grow to like it. When at night the moon covers the sweeping eaves with silver radiance and all within is aglow with soft invisible lights, it becomes the interpretation of some fairy dream, a dream that the visionary builder spent ten years of his life in making come true.

五

One afternoon in April, as the saxophone in the Hotel Imperial wailed out "Three o'Clock in the Morning," memorial cards were being distributed in honor of the 220th anniversary of the committing of harakiri by the "Forty-seven Rōnin," a day commemorated throughout Japan by millions of devotees. Comparatively near by the hotel, far greater crowds than ever gathered to worship at this modern shrine were then swarming through the gate of Sengaku-ji

TŌKYŌ

Temple, to honor the graves of the forty-seven Immortals.

In the days of the Shōgunate Government it was the established custom for the Imperial Court at Kyōto to dispatch, from time to time, envoys to Yedo (Tōkyō), to inquire after the Shōgun's health. On such occasions the Shōgun appointed special officers to attend upon these Imperial envoys, choosing them from among his *daimyōs*, territorial barons all feudatory to him and required to stay in Yedo for a portion of every year.

When in the third month of the fourteenth year of Genroku, by our reckoning 1701, it was known that Imperial messengers were on their way to Yedo, Asano, Lord of Ako, and Date, Lord of Yoshida, were appointed to entertain them. Lord Asano, a mere youth, at first declined the great honor, pleading the fact that he was unused to Court etiquette. But finally, obliged to accept, he was placed in the hands of Kira, the Grand Master of Ceremonies, for necessary instructions.

Kira, even in those troubled times, was a most notorious figure, avaricious, of corrupt habits, and invariably insolent to the feudal

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

lords who did not curry favor by making him presents. Lord Asano refused to buy his favor, thereby displeasing Kira, who determined to make Asano commit some blunder during the intricate ceremonials, with resultant disgrace. All went well with the reluctant host until the very last day, when Kira began to ridicule Asano for his boorishness, continuing his abuse until Asano, who hitherto had borne his insults in silence, lost his temper and publicly struck Kira with his sword. He would have killed him had not the palace guards appeared at once.

In those days court etiquette was law. To draw a blade in the court of the Shōgun meant death. Asano was commanded to commit harakiri (self-disembowelment), and, without demur, as was the usage of the times, at midnight he calmly carried out his master's orders.

As soon as a speedy messenger from Yedo reached Ako, Oishi, the chief retainer who had been left in charge of the castle, called a meeting of all the samurai subjects in order to discuss how they might best prove their loyalty to their master. It was the samurai code, that the humiliation of the overlord was the humiliation of his retainers. They and their master's enemy "could not live beneath the same sky."

T Ō K Y Ō

Without a dissenting voice, Oishi and forty-six other vassals of the unfortunate Asano resolved to wreak vengeance on Kira for the wrong suffered by their master.

Through the fall of their lord's house they now became "rōnin," as were termed those samurai who roamed the country at large without a feudal lord. Each went his own way, though keeping in constant communication one with the other.

Almost a year passed, and Oishi and his forty-six companions managed completely to conceal their purpose by feigning to have given up any hope of revenge. They exposed themselves to the contempt of their world by sinking into gross dissipation, as though forgetful of their lord's death. But all the while they were secretly scheming and planning for the future.

At length the long-dreamed-of opportunity arrived. At the hour of the tiger,—about three o'clock in the morning,—the valiant "Forty-seven" surrounded the house of Kira. A drum signal from their leader, and they stormed the premises, loudly shouting that the Rōnin of Ako had come for the head of Kira. Despite stout resistance they fought their way straight to the bedchamber of the man they sought—

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

for they had a plan of the house, given them by the daughter of the architect, who was in love with one of their band. But Kira was not in sight. A frantic hunt ensued, and an hour later the terrified victim was found in the tea-ceremony room to which a secret passage led. Being a high official, Kira was offered, according to the code of etiquette, "the honorable death." Hoping to escape, he refused to comply, and therefore was beheaded as a commoner, thus leaving a never-forgotten stain of cowardice on his name.

This the Rōnin accomplished without the loss of a single man, and the "Forty-seven," their hearts filled with gratitude, marched out into the night carrying their bloody trophy. Without hindrance they made their way through the streets of Yedo to the Temple of Sengaku-ji, their lord's burial-place. Here they washed Kira's head at the fountain, and, laying it in front of their master's grave, to which they made obeisance, reported to him, as though to a living person, all the details of their revenge.

This duty performed, Oishi reported their action to the High Priest of Sengaku-ji and to the Government authorities, announcing that they would await sentence at the Temple. All

TŌKYŌ

that day, and for many days after, the entire city of Yedo resounded with praises of this chivalrous deed. The fate of the Rōnin became the burning question of the hour. The Shōgun himself was greatly perturbed and sought counsel with the abbot of the great Nikko Temple. It was he who advised that the "Forty-seven" should be allowed to commit harakiri. And to prove to the world that their great loyalty was appreciated, officials of the Court were ordered to be present at their death.

All forty-seven Rōnin complied with the sentence, and they were buried beside the tomb of their lord, whom they had served so nobly.

六

Every day and all day great throngs pass through the Buddhist gate opening towards the Temple of Sengaku-ji, whose entrance is blazoned with a golden text eulogizing the "Forty-seven Rōnin." An ever-changing throng it is, and as the shifting human shuttles dart back and forth through the warp of life, they weave a motley pattern. There are sedately-kimonoed damsels, tripping along under multi-colored paper umbrellas; brightly-clad geishas, their



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ENTRANCE TO SHINTŌ TEMPLE GROUNDS, TŌKYŌ

TŌKYŌ

flowing kimono sleeves fluttering like butterfly wings; stolid gaping peasants; somber, white-bearded patriarchs. And there are swarms of children with shaven crowns or with straight black hair, the larger ones carrying, strapped to their backs, lumpy bundles from which emerge round heads with beady eyes that peer curiously at the world about them, or else, if closed in sleep, the heads roll about in a distressingly loose manner.

The drifting, gossiping elders slowly make their way through the narrow lanes lined with shops, in which hang gruesome pictures depicting the bloody story of the Rōnin. The youngsters, in brilliant plumage, gather like so many humming-birds around the venders of sweets, mostly old women, gnarled and wrinkled, who crouch low on frayed matting, their solacing pipe and tobacco ever ready at hand.

Without haste, all mount the steps leading to the sanctuary. Once they reach the curve of the time-stained roof, they purify themselves with water poured from a small wooden dipper. Then, bowing low to dusky images far within, they clap their hands, and, as if in response to the clatter of their copper coins, thrown into long wooden troughs as offerings to the gods,

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

there comes the sound of musical thanks from soft-throated gongs.

This rite over, the interrupted drag and clatter of *geta* returns. A moment's pause at the stone-rimmed pool in which was washed the head of Kira, and the noisy pilgrimage continues to the shadow of old trees, where moss-covered stones, with tall wooden tablets, that rise like sentinels, mark the graves of the Forty-seven Rōnin.

Nearly every hand carries a bundle of incense, even the babies tightly clutching a single joss-stick. Set alight at a smoldering fire kept always burning in near-by lanterns, a stick or two is laid at the foot of every tomb. The mothers, as they gently open baby fingers to drop their offering, send heavenward an earnest prayer, beseeching that their child may bring honor upon the family name as did the glorious Rōnin.

七

The foreigner who attempts to judge harakiri according to the ethical code of Christian Europe will ever walk in a hopeless maze of misunderstanding. Forbidden time and again by

TŌKYŌ

law, it is still reverentially honored when purity or patriotism of motive is evident.

The shrine of the "Forty-seven Rōnin" who committed harakiri over two hundred years ago is visited by no greater number than is the shrine of General Nogi and his wife, who sought their long sleep in time-honored samurai fashion as lately as 1912. This greatest general of the Russian War, famous for carrying Port Arthur by storm in a single day, and a man of modern scientific education, ever remained loyal to old tradition. He refused to live after the master whom he had served so well was gone; and his wife, equally loyal, faithful to the same tenets, refused to survive her husband.

Some sixty years ago, on the fifth and nineteenth of every month, just before dawn, a two-sworded samurai, followed by a slender lad of eight, might have been seen leaving their poor little home, modestly hidden among the trees of the thickly wooded part that surrounded the castle of the great Prince Mori of Tōkyō. This samurai, military instructor to the young Prince Mori, was named Nogi, and the eight-year-old lad was his son. Twice every month, as envoy

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

of his princely patron, Nogi was obliged to pay his respects to the Mori family tomb in the Buddhist Temple of Sengaku-ji.

To the eight-year-old nervous, sickly child, these early morning pilgrimages were the source of both supreme joy and terrifying fright. In the darkness before dawn one might stumble against a dead body, or make a football of some decapitated head, for before the Restoration *tameshigiri* (trial of the sword) was sometimes practiced. A samurai, especially a young and rather "smart" samurai, could, without fear of punishment, and occasionally did, try a new blade on the head of the first coolie he chanced to meet.

Dawn would break by the time father and son arrived at Sengaku-ji, when the father, in the name of the Prince, would worship at the family shrine. Little Nogi, forgetting all his fears, played in the modest enclosure back of the temple, where, side by side, lay the forty-seven graves of the famous Rōnin—holy altars, perfect symbols of old-time heroism.

Though samurai children from infancy were made familiar with the idea of suicide, the little Nogi perhaps was more privileged than most, growing up as he did in such intimate touch

TŌKYŌ

with one of the most glorious examples in Japan's book of heroes.

Some years later the Nogis, father, mother, daughter, and son,—the son now old enough to carry the two swords of a young samurai,—were forced to leave Tōkyō. The father in some way had displeased his overlord and had been condemned to what was called "The Closed Gate." He was forced to withdraw to his native city, and there, among his nearest relatives and friends, shut himself up for five months, first nailing two crossed bamboo sticks over the entrance doorway, thus intimating that he must not be disturbed in his retreat. He was not only forbidden to go out, but forbidden to laugh, or even to speak above a whisper, and this punishment applied not alone to him, but to every member of his family.

At the expiration of this virtual imprisonment, young Nogi was sent away to school. In those days, Japanese schoolmasters not only taught reading and writing, but they also fortified their charges against pain, cold, heat, and all the phantom fears which possess most of us. Choosing the blackest night, they would conduct their pupils to some haunted spot, preferably the place of public execution, and

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

leave them for an hour or so alone at the foot of the scaffold. Should some leaf-crackle or wind-sigh among the trees cause any indication of alarm, it was considered a sign of cowardice, and such cowards were ordered to climb the ladder that mounted to the scaffold's crossbeam and lift a head from one of the iron spikes, to carry home as a proof of stolid indifference to fear.

Young Nogi, by temperament as sensitive as a girl, even taunted by his sisters for timidity, suffered horribly, but never uttered a word of complaint. Despite this self-control his father noticed the boy's nervousness and would send him off alone on long trips through the mountains, where by day he might not see another soul and by night his only companions were the specters of his fears.

Nogi finally found the courage to confess to his father that he held the soldier's profession, for which he was being trained, in perfect horror, and that his one ambition was to become a scientist. This caused his father to show even greater severity, and the lad, in desperation, ran away from home. He sought a distant relative, well known as a classical scholar. But for a son desirous of learning Confucian philosophy,

whose first precept is obedience, to disobey his father was a bad beginning, and his cousin refused to receive him. At length, however, he was persuaded to do so by his wife, who pitied the poor lad. They put him to work in the rice fields, under the pretext that the study of classics demanded a body as strong as that required of a soldier. Rising before dawn, Nogi worked all day, and in payment his cousin gave him evening instruction in Chinese classics. This outdoor life hardened his body, while the doctrine of Confucius fortified his soul.

The Restoration, which forced all samurai to become soldiers, found Nogi ready, and in the wars that followed, the future general always sought the posts of greatest danger. Once when his regiment seemed hopelessly entrapped, he managed by personal bravery to save it. But the ensign officer was killed and the regimental flag captured, which to the mind of Nogi dishonored him. Only the frantic appeals of his fellow officers caused him to defer the self-inflicted death that the samurai code of honor demanded. No one, however, could keep him from sending in his resignation, which, coming to the notice of the Emperor, was refused. A personal letter to Nogi, written by the Emperor

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

at this time, marked the beginning of a long friendship that, on the part of Nogi, became passionate devotion.

At the outbreak of the war with Russia, he was promoted to the rank of General-in-Chief of the Third Army, with an imperative order to take Port Arthur at no matter what cost. With the possible exception of Verdun, Port Arthur will remain in history as the greatest hecatomb of all times. After the battle, not a vestige of earth could be seen for the dead and dying that covered it—among whom was the only living one of Nogi's sons. When the news of his death was brought to his father, without lifting his head from his writing, the General quietly said, "It is an honor that the Nation has accepted the humble sacrifice."

Of all the victorious generals who returned to Japan, Nogi was, perhaps, the only one who showed no pleasure in his victory. The specters of those thousands whom he had sent to death never left him; wherever he went, their ghosts accompanied him. Frequently he would ask himself whether a general more capable than he would not have discovered a way to have spared the lives of his soldiers. Even in his dreams he heard their voices saying, "We



AN AVENUE LEADING TO A TEMPLE

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

don't regret dying for our country, but were you not too spendthrift with our blood?"

In the latter years of his life, even those who most admired him could not refrain from expressing surprise at the modest life the General led and what seemed to them to be undue parsimony. Today the whole world knows the truth—known before only by the parents of the soldiers who fell at Port Arthur. Whenever he met a man whose son had served under him and been killed, General Nogi felt himself in debt to that man and in the case of a needy family, he invariably gave help. He himself died impoverished.

On the night of July 29, 1912, hundreds of thousands knelt in endless rows along the Triumphal Way, praying for their Emperor, who lay dying within the palace. General Nogi was at his side, also on his knees. His sorrow was so profound and overpowering that when, six weeks later at eight o'clock on the evening of September thirteenth, the guns announced the departure of the Imperial funeral cortège from the palace, the General and his Countess took their places before the family altar in their simple home, prepared for their last act of

TŌKYŌ

loyalty to their lord. Upon the white-matted floor was laid a rug of scarlet, a tall section of bamboo holding a spray of *sakaki* stood at each of the four corners, and there, with all the ceremony laid down by tradition, General Nogi committed harakiri, and the Countess, as prescribed by samurai code, severed the arteries of her neck. Thus they followed their dead master into the beyond.

Japan was stirred to its very depths, and as great a throng followed Nogi's funeral as that of the Emperor himself. Thousands passed the entire night about his grave, and thousands continue to visit it to this very day. The plain, two-storied cottage of the Nogis, Spartanly simple, thickly surrounded by old pine trees that add an air of solemnity, is held by the Government as one of the sacred places to be forever protected.



Never does a fire occur in Tōkyō but that some one repeats the legend of the "Furisode Fire." To repeat the story, the young daughter of a certain Hatamoto went with her friends one day to a park to view the flowers. As

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

they approached the park, they chanced to meet a young man, coming in the opposite direction, a man so beautiful that he seemed more god than man. With lips as red as roses, eyebrows as black as his glossy hair, and cheeks so fair as to laugh to scorn the driven snow, he was the picture of the fairy samurai prince.

In passing, the sleeve of his *furisode*, dyed with a pattern of water wheels, brushed against the young girl's hand like a caress. In her heart she immediately felt the stirring of a great love, which grew only the greater as the weary weeks and months dragged by without another sight of the man she so loved.

At length, overcome with sickening melancholy and longing, she fell dangerously ill. Tearfully did her mother and father beg her to confide in them, and finally she told them of her despairing love for a man of whose name even she was ignorant. The mother's one thought was that she might help her child; so she hastily sent for a dyer and ordered a black *furisode* patterned with water wheels, as described, and placed it beside her daughter.

In ecstasy the young girl clasped it to her breast. The weariness of endless waiting was over and peace came to her. But with the

TŌKYŌ

passing of the feverish exaltation she grew weaker and finally died, holding the *furisode* in her arms. At the funeral ceremony in the temple of Hongwanji the beloved *furisode* was placed over her coffin as a pall. Later, as was the custom, the priests sold it.

Only three months passed when this same water-wheeled *furisode* was brought again to the temple as a girl's coffin pall and again the priests sold it. But the third time it appeared at the temple, thrown across a girl's coffin, it attracted the attention of the officiating priest, who sensed a mystery and reported this extraordinary occurrence to the Father Superior.

From the bereaved parents he heard that their daughter, attracted by this *furisode* hanging in a second-hand shop, had purchased it. On bringing it home, she was at once taken ill with a raging fever and, after a few days' sickness, died.

The Father Superior then explained how this *furisode* had twice before come to the temple as a pall, at which the parents, their eyes opened to the horror of the situation, begged to have it burned rather than sold. The Father Superior gladly assented, and after the funeral party had left the temple he cast the *furisode* into a

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

brazier of fire, the priests chanting in chorus, "O blessed Buddha, whom we adore, let the souls of the three women quickly enter into Paradise."

As they sang, a darkness black as a raven's wing blotted out the sky, and at the same moment the flaming *furisode* opened out and flew upwards into the lofty ceiling of the temple, which soon was burning so furiously that the sparks scattered throughout the city, nearly destroying it.

九

A great city, Tōkyō, soon in population to be the third largest in the world. And yet, except just around the heart, which beats with such overweening pride beneath Western "sky-scrapers," it is an almost level expanse of two-storied roof-line, that hugs the earth amid a tangled mass of confused, narrow, crooked streets that cover more than one hundred square miles. To become lost is not a reflection on one's intelligence, and even the old tale of the man who was 'rikishaed about for nearly a week trying to find the city, becomes quite credible.

The original dozen or more poverty-stricken

TŌKYŌ

fishing villages that finally straggled together, to be bound as one by the cement of mutual interests, were, almost literally, founded on water—on ground seldom more than four feet above the sea-level. It is for this reason that the present Tōkyō, when it rains, reverts to the swamp of early days, looking as though it had lain under water for weeks and only just emerged, all a-drip, from the near-by ocean.

Luckily for the artistically inclined,—and every Japanese is an artist at heart,—Tōkyō's rainy days form a glorious Whistler-gray background for the most vividly-colored of *genre* canvases. They dress the coolies in straw overcoats and tented hats, transforming them into unruffled golden porcupines; they tuck up manly kimonos until the streets are regimented with unabashed bare legs "headed" by gaily tinted umbrellas; they cause the boys, in dignified imitation, to raise their skirts so high that the whole of their childish buttocks stare out solemnly upon an unscandalized world; they bring forth lighted paper lanterns to be hung, one by one, on 'rikisha shaft, making two when mirrored in the pool the water has formed; they rain-pelt the flowered robes of hurrying geisha, which swing aside in part revelation of silken

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

garments of gold and flame. Truly there is beauty in Tōkyō's rainy days.

But equally true is it that "beauty is only in him who sees it." Hearn, that great prose poet, once having loneliness and disillusion as companions, called Tōkyō a hopeless blot of ugliness. In contrast to this are the two generals, Saigo and Katsu, in command of the opposing Imperial and Shōgun troops, who, when meeting for conference on the "hill top" of Atago, before engaging in battle to decide which master should hold supremacy, happened to look down upon the city spread out before them and found it so passing fair that they then and there tearfully agreed to throw down their arms rather than fire, lest they destroy a beauty so entrancing.

To many, the view from this eighty feet of height suggests an ocean of monotonously dull gray waves—the lead-colored undulating roofs of half a million houses—pierced here and there by slender chimneys that resemble the periscopes of submarines partly submerged in troubled commercial waters, an overwhelming defeat of beauty at the hands of greedy industrialism.

Yet, hidden beneath the cobwebs of electric



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A PRIVATE GARDEN IN TŌKYŌ

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

wires strung to drunken poles that stagger down every roadway is many a miniature Eden—a tiny garden, where every leaf and twig is arranged with the delicate art that conceals art and every stone is set so as to give pleasure. Your enlightened eye will soon discover these pleasure gardens set within the narrowness that lies between dreary house walls. Costly toys they are, of course,—not for the enjoyment of poor men, unless they happen to be friends of rich ones, as sometimes occurs in this most luckless life.

While so much has been elbowed away by grimy trade and by the hand of the bartering Goth who has planted belching factories where princely gardens once stood, there are still many vast parks where all men may wander at will. These are provided by a Government that long ago learned to encourage the beautiful, foreseeing that the useful would encourage itself. Each has a distinction of its own, from Uyeno, where enormous century-old cherry trees reign supreme,—so heavy with age that their weeping branches brush the heads of those who pass, showering them with pinkish tears,—to Shiba, whose bronzed cryptomerias, like tall sentinels, guard splendid temple tombs.

TŌKYŌ

As with Rome, all roads lead to Tōkyō, drawing into that hungry maelstrom Japan's most distinguished sons and daughters. Not alone the noted in literature and sciences, the great financiers, the aspiring politicians and eminent editors, but a horde of lesser stars—famous wrestlers, celebrated actors, and beautiful geisha, together with thousands of ambitious, visionary youths and rabid fanatics. All these extreme elements go to form the advance guard of a nation in transition, making Tōkyō the marketplace for every fad and 'ism, the throbbing center of every novel idea, the mother of New Japan, who in mighty travail brings forth a strange god, bidding her people fall down and worship.

And all the while the unchanging stars keep their old state in her Imperial sky, the sign and symbol, perhaps, of immutable character. Less than fifty miles away, century-old habits still rule, and through the *shōji* of flower-entangled wooden houses the paper lanterns of olden days still send out their friendly arrows of flame and queer, primitive music still throbs throughout the land.

II

THE GEISHA

Yo no naka ya Cho chono tomaru Kado mo aru.

The world may be cold and gray, but still we have
the butterflies to chase our cares away.

IT was the inky darkness of an early spring evening, and quiet Tea-house Street, long and narrow, with its exotic staging, seemed theatrical, unreal. Velvety black inscriptions partially obscured even the dim half-light that filtered through paper lanterns, swinging provocatively in front of every frail grilled doorway. *Tamamidzu* (Jeweled Dew), *Asayuki* (Light Snow), *Morita* (Green Rice Field), *Yamauta* (Mountain Song), they read. But it was *Harunoya* (House of Spring) that was sought, and at length reached. Sounds of plaintively twanged *samisens* and the soft shoo-shoo of *tabi*-clad feet on silky matting floated out into the night.

A knock on the bamboo door instantly brought the smiling mistress of the house, who sank to her knees, bowing low, her face almost

THE GEISHA

touching the floor. With a polite hissing intake of breath, came the welcome, "*Irasshai!*" The *gwaikoku-jin* (strangers) were expected, and all was in readiness. Awkwardly slipping off their shoes, the guests tiptoed up a steep stairway and, from its almost Stygian darkness, plunged at once into a room dazzling with electric light.

Silken cushions lay on the floor, where, crouching upon their heels, were eight immovable, expectant figures. Four *hangyoku*,—half-fledged jewels,—dancing-girls of ten, or possibly twelve, years of age,—were present under the chaperonage of four elder geisha, the latter ceremoniously dressed in dignified crested black, relieved only by golden *obis* (girdles).

The dancing girls' tiny nothingness of body was lost within the folds of extravagant dress—kimonos tinted from the innocent blue of night to the vicious crudeness of violent color. Across them trailed huge fanciful flowers or fantastic birds of strange plumage. All were tightly sash-knotted behind with bows like the widely-spread wings of some gigantic butterfly hovering for a moment near these quaint children. The underlips of the *hangyoku* were painted red, one single smear across a face porcelain-like in its heavy enameling of liquid white.

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

Their heads were crowned with masses of ebony hair pomaded into whimsical shapes and festooned with silvery bells and paper flowers. Nothing could be too gorgeous, too daring, for these little tropical beings.

"*Komban wa!*" (Good evening) they twittered in excited unison, with many prostrations and much clapping of hands, the latter summoning maid servants, who shuffled in carrying tiny lacquered tables upon which were placed stone bottles of *sake* and bowls of unfamiliar sweets.

With quiet dignity the "elder sisters" played hostess, silently watchful of every want, while the *maiko* sat in the near background, giggling and gossiping among themselves in shrill, high-pitched tones. Feasting over, the tinkle of tuning *samisens* called them to attention. Voices were at once stilled, and the four strange little figures silently darted to the far end of the room to make ready.

Suddenly a chord was struck—such a chord as only oriental music contrives. It was answered by a rhythmic tattoo from two hand drums; and the *maikos* appeared, gently swaying, "like flowers in the wind." Their slim, childish forms were drowned in the waves of

THE GEISHA

long, trailing kimonos, heavily embroidered with lifelike branches of reddening autumn leaves—some veined with lingering bits of green, some of flaming red or apple russet, others the withered brown of mature death. A plaintive wail of despair came from the quivering strings of the *samisen*, and slowly, very slowly, the dancers turned. Wide sleeves, drooping from softly undulating hands, and billowing skirts gave semblance to falling leaves fluttering to the ground. The tempo changed. Faster and faster it grew, until the air went mad, like a storm in full cry, filling the room with the shriek of winds. The dancers whirled and swung wildly, and the leaves seemed to fly before the tempest. The music died away. Autumn-tinted sleeves curled about heads and faces, concealing them in dying reds. The dancers, as if tossed in an eddy of wind, sank gradually towards the floor, finally dropping, as heaps of swirling leaves swept into piles by the breath of nature.

Again and again they danced, oftentimes with the rigid quaintness of marionettes, when the music defied all Western rules of phrasing, curiously disquieting in the melancholy, minor half-tones, reminiscent of the original ragtime

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

without tune—an insistent droning and drumming of discordant sounds. But in every dance, color, movement, and sound blended into one complete picture. It mattered not whether it were a “primitive,” with mechanical, distorted posturing, or the perfection of rhythm, when silken streamers swayed in continuous motion that brought to mind the rippling waters of running streams and the suggestion of winged fairies beating their way through shadowed moonlight.

All too soon did the flat ivory plectra strike the plaintive “*Sayōnara*” (Good-by), when down the steep stairway trooped the laughing company. At the entrance court, geisha, dancing girls, maids, and mistress knelt in line, once more bowing to the ground, their shrill “*O yasumi nasai*” (May you sleep well) awakening the echoes of the silent street.

二

It was Japanese ancestor-worship with its ritualistic songs and sacred dancing that brought into being the public performers who later became known as *geisha*—“accomplished persons.” In those days they were the companions only

THE GEISHA

of rank and mentality. This fostered so great a pride in their profession that these women became famous for chivalric deeds and unstained virtue, and were made the theme of countless poems and novels.

Many were the pathetic stories of daughters, overwhelmed by the financial ruin of their parents, begging to be sold as geisha, that the money so earned might rebuild the family fortune. There were incidents like that of a little girl of ten, who was left alone with a blind, penniless, widowed mother—father, brothers, and sisters all dead. Secretly this child sold herself, hiding the sacrifice price beneath her sleeping mother's pillow. Then she crept out of the house, into the unknown world, to gain a stern knowledge that all too soon came to dwell where wistfulness once had home.

Roughly speaking, the geisha fall within three classes: daughters, or orphans legally adopted as daughters; those who follow the profession for some family reason and are hired out to teachers for varying periods of time; and finally, sham geisha, whose only title to the pretension is a comely face and an ability to make herself agreeable,—a class contemptuously regarded by her educated sisters.



From ■ sketch by Tan Kai Suzuki

AFTER THE RAIN

THE GEISHA

The truly accomplished geisha is trained from babyhood, her first lessons beginning when she is only two or three years of age. Years of patient study are required to learn that wealth of allusion to poems, legends, and flowers, with which the artistic treasure-house of Japan is stored, all of which are interpreted in dance. Every step of these classical dances, the very expression of the face, the position of fingers in carrying a fan, every movement of hand and arm, is an art that must be learned. The training is not alone continuous, but most severe, every waking moment being spent with some master of music, singing, or dancing, with teachers of flute, *samisen*, or drum, and with instructors in tea ceremony and flower arrangement. No other girl of her age works so hard as a geisha.

Around twelve years old, her apprenticeship days are over, and she appears in public, dancing and playing or making herself generally useful to older geishas. That, perhaps, is the happiest time of her career,—being treated as a child, universally petted and caressed, without any of the cares and troubles of her “elder sisters.”

At length comes her début as a fully-fledged

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

geisha, when, as a mark of "coming out," she distributes presents among restaurants and tea-houses, upon whose patronage she must depend for engagements. Her photograph is printed in magazines and newspapers, and, well launched, her rise or fall depends largely upon womanly discretion and personal strength of will.

When a business man gives a dinner to business fellow countrymen or to foreigners, he invariably calls in geisha. They decorate the room as does a flower, forming a garden background for the doll tables, laden with red lacquer. In magnificent ceremonial robes, they flutter about the dull, somberly-dressed men, striking an exotic discord—which makes the perfect melody.

Men also seek the society of geishas when weary or needing mental stimulus, claiming that wives are not companions, knowing so little of what goes on in the outside world, while geishas, always gay, young, and laughing, with a fastidious appreciation of all the arts, are more than mere performers.

For a thousand years the willow tree, bending "whither the wind listeth," has been held as the symbol for wifehood. Until recent years

THE GEISHA

wives were not taught accomplishments—only virtues, and for centuries they were called the “honored interior,” far too precious to appear in public restaurants, and seldom seen. What if geisha did entertain their men? Theirs was the greater privilege of attending upon them when they returned, satiated with festivities!

The life of the average geisha is a sort of play—tragedy or comedy, as the gods decree; a rapid succession of exciting events, with all the contrasts of life—the bitter and the sweet, tears and laughter, a whirlwind of pleasure and a reaping of sorrow, seemingly irresistible temptations nobly overcome—and shameful falls, for a geisha's life is obviously one of many temptations.



The arbitrary judgment of superficial observers that the geisha, while generally innocent enough in appearance, is always a most improper person, has been so widely sown as to become one of the accepted tenets in the study of Japanese sociology. These self-appointed judges rarely, if ever, come into contact with the higher type. For not only are

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

their services usually bespoken many weeks in advance, but there is the little-understood fact that in associating with foreigners, popular geisha would seriously endanger their prestige. Even if chance or favor in high places did bring the two together, a complete ignorance of the language,—and conversation with the geisha is a fine art, many being brilliant raconteurs,—together with an absolute inability to appreciate their professional work, would hardly offer a fair background for the passing of judgment.

A professional courtesan the geisha certainly is not, though with so great a number, roughly half a million, there are, naturally, geisha of every type, ranging from the wretched outcast in the vice-ridden "open ports," to the highly accomplished woman whose favors are never for sale at any money price. This, however, is no mawkishly sentimental attempt to draw a screening veil over the undeniable fact that "the shower of gold falls into the Danaë lap" of many a geisha, for to be the favored of some geisha idol of the hour is the brightest feather in the fashion cap of Japan's *jeunesse dorée*. But the *Kemban* (central office, through which all engagements must be made) takes every precaution to prevent undue familiarity, never

THE GEISHA

permitting less than two geisha to be hired by one person.

Only since the war, with its sudden access of wealth bringing to big cities like Tōkyō and Ōsaka reproductions of the worst features of Western society, has there been a pronounced deterioration in the geisha world. Just as in Europe and America, there has been a sharp decline of religious and moral conceptions in Japan, with much lower standards, followed by the inevitable consequences. The *narakin*—newly rich—are teaching the younger generation that money is the only key to happiness, and behind the scenes of many of today's crimes of fraud, embezzlement, and even murder, there often lurks a geisha.



The geisha plays another, perhaps unacknowledged, part—that of arbiter of feminine fashions. She spends lavishly, for she is inconceivably extravagant in dress and without thought for the morrow. Unlike her Western sisters, the geisha goes, not to a dressmaker, but to an artist, to whom she confides some beautiful fancy. The artist brings this pretty conceit

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

to life, and when sufficient material for a gown is made, the "painting" is destroyed. Not only are her kimono and her *obi* the work of an artist, but everything the geisha has about her, from her fan to the very ornaments in her hair, make her one of the most exquisitely gowned women in Japan—the daintily fluttering butterfly that brings a shimmer of color wherever she may alight.

Sooner or later the majority marry popular actors, wrestlers, or restaurant keepers, and no better wife could be found for those depending upon the goodwill of the public, for no woman is so gifted in the art of pleasing.

Rarely, nowadays,—as often happened in the early years of the restoration,—do the geisha attain the dignity of social position. To be sure, numbers of peeresses, wives of scholars and men of attainment, can recall, if they will, the exhilarating days when they played the samisen and danced in public, for be it remembered that the peerage in Japan is an invention of less than sixty years. Many of the most distinguished men of today were at that time only poor, if ambitious, youths, who would think it a great honor to have gained the affection of such celebrities.

THE GEISHA

Of course, there is the other side to this picture, the side that portrays those geisha who have chosen the uncontrolled, short, and merry life; who, beauty and popularity gone, inevitably awaken some gloomy morning to the necessity of selling themselves from town to town, until crushed beneath more youthful rivals. To them come corruption, misery, want, and friendless death. This is the side upon which moralists love to dwell.

III

THE OIRAN

Aki no cho Otsuru hi ôte Kusa gakure.

Poor butterfly, in vain it chased the setting
sun and in the grass must die.

THE "Scarlet Butterflies" Japan shares with all the rest of the world. And, indeed, as long as animal man and love's coarse brother slime this world of ours, they will be found everywhere. For centuries churches have thundered, governments have enacted innumerable laws, self-sacrificing reformers have squandered the best years of their lives in this cause, but the courtesan still survives and will—"until the waters of time engulf the world." And so while Europe and America raised their eyes in sanctimonious horror, shudderingly drawing aside their own "spotless garments" in fear of contaminating example, Japan boldly, frankly endeavored to control what no human legislation, so far, has been able to prevent.

Well over three hundred years ago, the great Iéyasu publicly declared that though the gath-

THE OIRAN

ering places of courtesans were the worm-eaten spots of the earth, if forcibly abolished, men of unrighteousness would become like raveled threads, secretly woven into the warp and woof of unsuspecting virtue. He therefore condemned the "Aphrodites" of Japan to segregation, and on the city's outskirts, where there was a swampy moor of rushes,—in Japanese, *Yoshiwara*,—he caused a certain area to be surrounded by a deep canal, with gates carefully guarded day and night.

Indescribable hardship, cruel injustices, wretched slavery, is there inevitably; but as years passed, moderate reform followed reform. In 1872 Mutsuhito (Gentle Pity), Japan's greatest Emperor, decreed that all persons held in bondage should be at once released and that every inmate of the Yoshiwara must be there of free will or not at all. This partly awakened his people to the infamous conditions then existing, though their eyes were not fully opened to the most scandalous disgrace of all until as recently as 1920.

Every evening just as the mingled music of the city's curfew bells spread over the plain to hover for one moment above the miserable "Quarter" before losing itself in the distances,

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

the "buds and blossoms" of the Yoshiwara arranged themselves before embroidered screens, separated from the world without by a fence of polished wooden rods. There, decked out in the dazzling gorgeousness of oriental splendor, their almond eyes startlingly black against pallid ivory-white cheeks, they sat for long hours, speechless and motionless, like the wax figures in shop windows—on sale.

Poverty brought the majority there, the greatest influx always coming directly after some national calamity—earthquakes, typhoons, floods, and fires all being Yoshiwara allies. Custom in the Orient is far stronger than any law, and the mind of the East ever clings to the belief in the rightness of a daughter sacrificing herself for ruined parents. They go of "free will," so they make affidavit, but none the less as slaves bound by the chains of custom that insists that such sacrifices shall be offered, making them not unlike the Athenian maidens sent in tribute to the Minotaur of Crete.

As duty, not inclination, is the main impulse, these "Dainty Iniquities" of the East seldom fall to the low, vicious level of the West. The foul-mouthed, brazen creatures such as sometimes worship Venus for gold can rarely be seen

THE OIRAN

in Japan. Eastern sentiment terms them "Lotus flowers in the mud, defiled in body but not in heart"; and the really exquisite delicacy with which all vulgarity and grossness are concealed is elsewhere unparalleled.

—

Abruptly the two jinrikishas stop, and the panting *kuruma-ya* (pullers), leg-weary after the long haul to the far outskirts of the city, signal their fares to alight. They have reached Keiseimachi, Cause-of-the-gradual-falling-of-the-castle City, and are at the top of the little knoll, Emon-zaki (Straighten-out-dress Hill), where all Japanese philanderers, according to custom, smooth out their travel-rumpled clothing before visiting the Jinja, a guardian temple that enshrines a Japanese Eros, to whom devotion should be paid by those intending to worship at "shrines" within the walls.

But a short distance away, at the end of "Waiting lane," rises the Ō-Mon, a great entrance gateway, police guarded, its stone side-posts chiseled with the poetic thought of some *sake*-bibbing verse-maker: "It is a dream of spring-tide, when the streets are full of cherry

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

blossoms, lightly touched by autumn color as the gay lanterns burst into brilliant flame." As far as the eyes can see on this April night, rows of cherry trees smother in flowers the two lines of flaming red lanterns, now metamorphosed into streams of dancing scarlet, whipped into motion by the evening breeze.

The stone and brick houses behind bear no sign to indicate their purpose. Only on walking within their theatrical lobbies do they reveal themselves, the walls being plastered with life-size photographs of the siren inmates. In front of these graven images sits enthroned the high priest of Libertina, his wrinkled shaking hands offering tickets for sale, while his police acolyte subjects every buyer to severe inquisition, putting into writing a detailed personal description, with profession and address.

Of no interest, these, to our adventurers; they seek the dim picturesque entrance to a *machiai* (meeting place), behind whose paper windows with their myriad illumined squares await six of the most popular *oiran*. Japan, with her inherent love of poetic symbolism, still terms this the flower district, and the most charming among its frail beauties, *oiran*, queens of flowers.



AN OIRAN WITH HER ATTENDANTS

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

A grilled doorway, the first on the second street to the right, is invitingly open. Within, on the concrete floor, arranged pair by pair, are wooden *geta*—clogs, nearly a foot high, painted with daintily-colored designs of butterflies and flowers. Six pairs in all.

A dark passageway leads to a "thirty-mat room" that is arranged in ceremonious Japanese fashion. In the *tokonoma* (alcove) is a *kake-mono*, picturing a famous waterfall; in front, a bronze vase holding a simple branch of budding apple. Two of the walls are of unpainted wood, selected for the beauty of the natural grain; the third is of sliding paper partitions, covered with masterpieces of Japanese painting; while all along the fourth, the paper *shōji* (windows) have been pulled wide open, revealing quaint bits of garden, faintly illumined by swaying lanterns. The room itself is lighted by six huge candles in brass holders, their wavering flames casting whimsical shadows. Perfect simplicity and dignity are there, without one discordant note.

From the veranda—hung with lights, giving to the garden the effect of a theater stage—fluttered in a bevy of geisha, with the inevitable teapots and tiny cups of welcome. Squatting

THE OIRAN

on silken cushions, they began to play their long-necked *samisens*, completing the oriental atmosphere needed for the Arabian Night drama that gradually unfolded.

Starting with a stately procession of "Night Cherries," scarlet women, clothed in brutal red, their *obis* tied in front as custom decreed, slowly emerged, phantom-like, from the dusk of the hallway. Each was followed by a *kamuro* (female page) and men-servants, who carried an elaborate chest containing changes of clothing and the bedding of their mistress. Slowly, with expressionless faces, stiff from the curious whitening of the East, they circled the room and then lost themselves in the shadows, later to reappear one by one.

First came Little Purple, her hair diademed with flowers of red and gilt and a dazzling glory of tortoise-shell pins that stuck out from the head like the aureole of a saint. Her coat was of white figured satin, dyed with purple clouds, streaked with golden lightning. Beneath, showed a long trailing kimono embroidered with a life-size peacock, each feather true to nature. She glided rather than walked, and the better to display the gorgeousness of her attire pivoted on her rouged toes, that peeped

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

from under the heavily-padded hem. With a low obeisance, she picked from a near-by lacquered stand a *sake* cup of ancient Satsuma, from which with much ceremony she drank in imitation of the nuptial ceremony, crying as she did so, "*Anata konata!*" And the unholy marriage was supposed to be consummated.

In rapid succession followed White Brightness, Jeweled River, Gold Mountain, Pearled Harp, and the Stork that lives a thousand years. One in lavender silk, a mass of flowering iris; another in brocade stiff with an embroidered tiger chasing a butterfly; the third and fourth, in cloth of gold, upon which were outlined the gods of Good Fortune; while the last was decked in filmy clouds of silver, where hovered great white birds with outstretched wings. Each went through the same marriage ceremony, every movement having long ago been prescribed by custom.

The curtain rises on the second act, when the "temporary wife" has finally been selected and her *kamuro* notified. She imparts the news by a shrill "*O meshikai!*" (Honorably, change your garments). The *oiran* immediately goes to her room, shortly to reappear in less ceremonious attire and take silent part in the subse-

THE OIRAN

quent feast of *samisen* music. At the order "O *hike!*" (honorable retirement), she again changes, this time to an outer night kimono of scarlet crêpe, trimmed with rose and edged with gold and silver threads that give the effect of waves breaking upon the seashore, and bound to her slender figure by a broad *obi* of wrinkled silk.

When at last the *samisens* sound a primitively seductive invitation, the *oiran* leads the way along the candle-lit balcony that overlooks the garden, where, in the flickering light, the twisted agony of the dwarf pines suggest the presence of bewitched spirits. At the extreme end of a long, shadowy corridor, she slips back a sliding-door of painted lacquer. At the far side of the room rests a gold screen and within the concave of its folded leaves, a standing paper lantern. This, with the glowing charcoal in an *hibachi*, supplied light barely sufficient to read the scroll above the doorway, "The chrysanthemum always preserves its charm, even in winter, when most flowers die."

Three *futons* (soft mattresses) had been laid on the floor, one on top of the other, the upper, of woven scarlet crêpe, showing beneath the coverlet of black velvet which is partially folded

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

back. Beside this couch are a flower-filled vase of Satsuma porcelain and a small wooden image of the Goddess Benten. Just for a moment the *oiran* kneels before her. Then, still without a word, she throws a heavy silk around the lantern—to blow it out would be unlucky—and hides the soft incandescence of the charcoal under a bronze dragon cover. Except for the distant strum of *samisens*, not a sound is heard. The room is in darkness.

IV

THE THEATER

Okī okī yo Waga tomo ni sen Iro ko chō.

Awake, awake, you golden butterfly,
I want to see you play!

GEISHA, *oiran*, actors,—the butterfly trio that ever serves to chase dull care away,—so have the three been classed together since the early sixteenth century, when Ōkuni, a beautiful priestess who belonged to the great shrine of Izumo, brought into being the first public theater in Japan.

It is the age-old story of a young priestess who runs away from the sacred precincts with her lover. Nagoya Sanzaburu first won favor with the beautiful Ōkuni by writing temple dramas in which she acted. Her religious world was so fascinated by these dramas that Ōkuni determined to seek a wider audience, making peace with the offended Ōnamuji, God of Izumo, by promising to consecrate part of her earnings to the repair of his shrine. But there followed weary, disillusioning weeks for

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

the gentle priestess. At length she came to Kyōto. There her seductive beauty obtained from the infatuated Shōgun-general the long-desired permission to open a theater, with her lover as manager and herself as the star.¹

Ōkuni's success was immediate, and she was so acclaimed throughout the Empire that many women were attracted to this new profession. But for the most part they were women of little refinement and fewer morals, and so sullied the name of actress that shortly thereafter a law was passed prohibiting women from appearing on any stage. This law remained in effect for over two hundred years and was repealed only at the time of the wholesale upheavals of Restoration days.

During these two centuries women's parts on the stage were taken by men, and, ever a slave to custom, Japan still continues this habit—except in the so-called “actress performances” at Tōkyō.

Those actors who customarily impersonate women reach an almost unbelievable perfec-

¹ Theatrical performances—*Ki*—were at that time largely composed of songs—*Ka*—and dances—*Bu*; hence they became known as *Kabuki*, today's vernacular for any dramatic performance. In like manner, because those same early productions took place on open lawns, a theater is still called *Shibai*, turf-place.

THE THEATER

tion, due not to trick of dress, but to a life whose every waking hour is passed in womanly attire and in women's society, until, like that actor of old Greece, who wore his mask so long that his face took its likeness, they become outwardly molded into womanly semblance.

二

The famous man-actress, Kikunojo, when well over seventy, played with such perfect art the part of a youthful, beautiful geisha that he is celebrated in theatrical history. The story is told that on this night, early dressed for the part, he sadly paced back and forth behind the scenes, anticipating failure. His years weighed heavily upon him, but even as bitter tears filled his eyes, running down his cheeks to splash the painted whiteness of slender hands, the floor behind him creaked under stealthy approaching footsteps and to his amazement he felt two arms steal about his neck as a voice whispered, "My beloved Chō San!" Not until the actor spoke did the philandering stage manager realize that it was Kikunojo whom he had embraced, and not his loved geisha, who had promised to meet him in the theater *machiai* that

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

night. Deeply chagrined at the blunder and filled with dismay at the thought of giving offense to the great man-actress, the manager slunk away in confusion; but the face of Kikunojo shone with pride, and that night he acted as never before.

On reaching his dressing-room after the final scene, Kikunojo sent for the culprit, who came in trepidation. "I am most sorry for my mistake," he faltered. Kikunojo's only reply was to hand him a thousand-*ryo* note, at which the man gazed in stupid astonishment. To his added surprise, he caught a smile of happiness playing about the rouged lips of the old man-actress.

"I don't understand," stammered the manager, feeling that some joke was being played.

"No need to understand; take your money and begone." Again alone, Kikunojo threw himself light-heartedly upon his silken *futons*, assured that "True art knows no age."



For the Occidental, ignorant of the language, the audience of an ordinary Japanese theater holds more of interest than does the play itself.

THE THEATER

A performance that begins at five in the afternoon and lasts until nearly midnight allows time for the spectators to stage many a domestic comedy that is enacted with all the artless freedom and informality of an "at home." And as at home, everyone is seated on the floor, which in a theater resembles some gigantic waffle iron, with regular box squares surrounded by a railing, perhaps three inches wide and about a foot deep. Each square contains six little bamboo mats that serve as seats and make the waffle pattern.

Here in undressed ease will squat an entire family, from wrinkled grandame to suckling babe, all serenely smoking—except the baby, who openly, loudly, and unabashedly contents itself at its mother's breast. Maids and "boys" (boys of fifty) are continually tight-roping back and forth over the narrow partition rails, carrying from neighboring tea-houses *hibachis* (fireboxes), trays of food, and tea or cakes, turning the theater into a veritable picnic ground where each little family crowds around its own fireside,—the *hibachi*,—placidly eating, sleeping, and drinking, as a well-known drama of old Japan unfolds its curdling story. One sanguinary scene follows another, reaching the

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

inevitable climax with some samurai hero drawing a knife across his stomach until his twitching limbs are drenched in blood.

Of love comedies and farcical burlesques there are of course plenty, but the historic, patriotic drama outrivals all others in popularity. Japanese revel in the heroic clash of swords and thud of falling bodies. "Chushingura," for example, the time-worn story of the Forty-seven Rōnin, written a little over a hundred years ago, with which every man, woman, and child in the Empire is familiar, will always, no matter when or where given, crowd a theater. Age, old times, old manners, old moralities are honored in Japan as in few other countries.

Only at the Imperial Theater of Tōkyō does the modern spirit receive half-hearted welcome. With true oriental politeness it is made to feel at home in an environment of its own—an occidental mass of splendid marble, housing every theatrical luxury of Europe and America. In this alien soil all sorts of strange theatrical flowers are planted, some few to take root and ripen under the sun of public approval, but the greater number to shrivel and die for lack of understanding attention.

Attempt after attempt has been made to revo-



SCENE FROM AN ANCIENT TRAGEDY

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

lutionize the stage with Western modern culture—domestic comedies with foreign settings, foreign plays with Japanese staging, Hamlet, Maeterlinck's "Monna Vanna," Julius Cæsar, Faust, Suderman's "Magda," the "Salome" of Wilde, plays of Dumas, Ibsen, Shaw,—all have made their brief entry and hurried exit, when a somewhat bored but ever polite audience return with relief to the drama of their own blood-stained ancestors.



The Imperial Theater's April program—plays in Japan, successful or unsuccessful, occupy the stage for just one month—offered the usual characteristic medley of tragedy, comedy, legend, and farce.

The first was based on the legend of the famous prince of Nabéshima and his vampire cat. This animal, insanely jealous of the Prince's wife, O Toyo, a lady of rare beauty and charm, strangled her to death. Then, burying her body, he assumed her form and began to bewitch the Prince. Day by day the Prince's strength dwindled. Enfeebled and oppressed, he was fast nearing death when, hoping to solve

THE THEATER

the mystery of their master's decline, his devoted retainers arranged a nightly vigil. Hiding themselves in a room adjoining their master's, they waited. Suddenly, agonized moans broke the quiet of the night, and silhouetted on the paper lantern that stood near the sleeper's couch was the shadow of a cat's head. The horrified men rushed into the room with drawn swords, stabbing blindly at the shadow, when, from the couch, a huge black cat sprang and escaped through the window into the darkness.

五

Following the tragedy came a Japanese mystic pantomime, "The Woman and Her Shadow," written by the French ambassador to Japan. The note of mystery on which the play is pitched impresses one immediately the curtain is pulled aside.

The foreground shows a lotus pond, over which a moon, shadowed by clouds, casts cold, silvery rays. A bridge leads to a higher level, where stands a milestone that marks the border between two worlds—the world of facts and the world of imagination. The land of fancy is suggested by ghostly white mists,

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

through which, dimly, can be seen old pine and cherry trees grouped about a lantern of stone, whose lights glow softly in the half obscurity.

An ancient samurai crosses the bridge and halts for a moment at the milestone. Then he prostrates himself before the lantern, which is a memorial to the woman he has loved and lost. As he kneels in sorrowful prayer, the shadow of this woman appears in the distant background, slowly walking through the mists. But as the warrior eagerly rushes towards her, she hurriedly retraces her steps, to vanish in the semi-darkness.

At that moment a woman of flesh and blood, magnificently clad in the rich robes of olden days, descends from a palanquin that has been borne over the bridge on the shoulders of retainers. After a moment's hesitation, the warrior greets her with the story of the shadow that mysteriously appeared to him while he was at his devotions. The woman mocks him, pointing to a cherry branch that is reflected on the mist curtain. But as they look, phantom butterflies flutter from blossom to blossom and a supernatural voice is heard singing, "The power of imagination is so great that it can make flowers blossom and butterflies live."

THE THEATER

Then the cynic woman takes a *samisen* in hand, and dances to the strains of her own music. At the sound, the shadow reappears, also dancing, and the woman cries out, "See, it is my shadow and not that of the woman whom once you loved!" But the samurai notices a difference in the dancing of the two, and is at a loss what to believe. A brief mental struggle ensues, ending in his rejecting Reality and turning to Illusion, who is beckoning to him.

Seeing this, the woman, Reality, seizes him. He draws his sword to frighten her away. The shadow, Illusion, crouches in terror. Now thoroughly mystified, the warrior strikes at the shadow. The woman shrieks and dies—and the shadow vanishes. He has killed both Reality and Illusion.

Mists slowly envelop the entire stage as the warrior, the symbol of humanity caught between the world of reality and the world of illusion, stumbles back over the bridge and out of sight. The wailing of plaintive music from a native orchestra of sixty-five pieces—*samisens*, *kotos*, flutes, gongs, and drums—moves the spirit to sympathy with the mood of the play as no other music possibly could have done.

六

In sharp contrast follows *Rankgoku* (Unfinished Symphony), a play written by a Japanese, with America as its setting. It is a sordid melodrama, of a musician, the lover of a Metropolitan Opera star for whom he has been writing an opera. Blinded by an accident, he is unable to finish his work of love.

Throughout this antipodean play actors and actresses (women here assume their rightful rôles), dressed in American clothes, sensation-ally dash, cinema-like, from lower New York's illuminated skyline, through a gambler's den and an opium joint, to a Forty-second Street dance cabaret. This last, incidentally, the Japanese police censored as immoral.¹ The last

¹ Information having come to the *Nichi-Nichi* (one of Tōkyō's leading newspapers) that "Rankgoku, Interrupted Symphony," had been severely criticized by the police, a reporter was sent to review it. He wrote: "I considered the report merely propaganda for the play, but on seeing it for myself, I could scarcely believe my eyes, so vulgar was it and of such a low standard of morals. In one scene Japanese women scantily dressed in low-necked, short-skirted gowns, clinging to men, pranced about the stage to noisy music without tune in an extraordinarily awkward dance (fox-trot), while between dances the actresses would even speak to men in the orchestra seats. So morally ugly a play has no place on our Imperial stage, and from the standpoint of art it gives not one single opportunity for criticism."

THE THEATER

act brought happiness and a Fifth Avenue palace, where the lips of hero and heroine meet in long-deferred rapture, sending a shudder down the spine of the Japanese, disgusted as would be a European at some act which would constitute in his eyes a public obscenity.

The one redeeming feature of the performance was the orchestral accompaniment, Western music by native composers, in whose sea of exquisite melody the waves of crudeness and vulgarity sank into forgetfulness. "Ein blindes Voeglin" and "Maria Magdalena," of Wagner inspiration, would have done credit to any modern composer.

七

The savory to this theatrical feast was a comedy-trifle seasoned with the Attic salt of classic humor. There were but three players—Ono No Komachi, a maiden; Fukakusa, her lover; and a man-servant. The action takes place at Komachi's home near Kyōto on a midsummer night. Komachi is seated on the veranda, intently listening. From the neighboring trees comes the chirping of many locusts.

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

Komachi: The night is far advanced! How restless I feel! I shall not find quiet until he shyly approaches and taps on the door of the brushwood fence. He is late tonight! The moon is high! Why does he not appear? And why have I imposed upon him so great a trial? Yet I have promised to be his if he will but come and knock a hundred times.

Was I unfeeling and cold-hearted? He has come every night in spite of rain and wind, and now it is not he but I that am worried. When I hear him tap at the door of the brushwood fence and then quietly steal away, I feel a sharp pain, as though a knife had been thrust into my heart. But I knew no other way to test him, a man's heart is so untrustworthy! How was I to know that his was so dependable! Ninety-nine nights have passed since first he came; tomorrow will be the one-hundredth. How impatiently he must wait! But in truth, I await far more impatiently than he. The first time I heard him knock at the entrance door, my pride alone was touched; now my heart is conquered by his unwavering devotion. Every time he knocks he seems to say, "Foolish

THE THEATER

woman, you torment yourself as well as me only to satisfy a senseless pride."

What a beautiful moon! And here am I, a fatuously proud woman, coldly making her lover return home on such a night. Why do I not, I who love him so greatly, throw myself on his breast? But listen, the locusts have stopped their chirping. Someone approaches. It must be he! (*Steps are heard.*) It is he; he comes as devotedly as ever. What an imbecile of a woman! Why do I not receive him tonight? Only tomorrow will be the hundredth night, and yet he knocks as timidly as at first, though his heart by now is surely bursting with vehement passion. He is turning away! He is leaving! Shall I let him go? May I not reward the unswerving faithfulness which has brought him here ninety-nine nights? Is there any reason why I must wait till the morrow? I only have to cast aside mistaken pride. (*The sound of footsteps become fainter.*) I still have time. (*Hurries to the gate.*) Hello, Fukakusa! He does not hear me! He has gone! I say, (*raising her voice*) Fukakusa, do come back!

Man's Voice: Did you call?

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

Komachi: Yes. You have visited here ninety-nine nights as if but one night. I am so satisfied with your love and devotion that I cannot let you return. Enter tonight. The moon is very beautiful. Let us forget all but love. (*No answer.*) Why do you hesitate? Come quickly.

Man's Voice: My heart beats in response, O Komachi San, but I deem it wiser to wait until tomorrow.

Komachi: How strange a reply! It was I who imposed the hundred visits, and now when I relent and tell you that I will welcome you tonight, you hesitate.

Man's Voice: Confusion overwhelms me, but it is best to wait one more night. If we cling to our agreement, the hundredth night will surely bring to both much greater satisfaction than this ninety-ninth, with its broken vow. A true sense of honor dictates my answer.

Komachi: You are mulishly obstinate. I release you from your promise and you answer no and prate about your honor. Now I will not see you on the hundredth night, or the thousandth. I will never see you again!

Man's Voice: Alas, what do you say?

THE THEATER

Komachi: That this is the last time we talk together.

Man's Voice: What shall I do? What shall I do? (*Starts to leave in evident consternation and then stops short.*) I say, Komachi San.

Komachi: What is it you want?

Man's Voice: To confess the truth. I am not Fukakusa.

Komachi: What!

Man's Voice: I am only one of his servants.

Komachi: Saints of Buddha!

Man's Voice: Fukakusa personally came seventy times and then, not feeling well, I have since come on his behalf.

Komachi: The wretch!

Man's Voice: Though he does not come himself, his love is constant. I will return to my lord and bring him back, when love and this beautiful moon will cause you to forget all else.

Komachi: What a miserable wretch to deceive a woman such as I!

Man's Voice: Deceive you, no. He is at home in bed.

Komachi: Let him stay there! But watch how I put him to shame!

Man's Voice: I beseech you, no!

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

Komachi: A splendid idea occurs to me even now. As you have come in Fukakusa's place, I will receive you as Fukakusa hoped to be received.

Man's Voice: What can you mean?

Komachi: A capital revenge. The whole town knows that Fukakusa is making me a hundred visits. When it learns that the woman to whom he has long been paying court has been the plaything of one of his servants, he will hardly be able to walk the street with accustomed pride. How delightful will be this revenge. Though you be one-eyed or wooden-legged, you shall be my lover this one night, the lover of the haughty Komachi. Come in at once.

Man's Voice: (*In dismay.*) Impossible. I am an old man, nearing seventy!

Komachi: What do I care about your age? I want revenge.

Man's Voice: Pray, you must excuse me; I have been a faithful servant these many years, I can't so forget myself now.

Komachi: What an ill-natured booby!

Man's Voice: My only safety lies in flight.
(*Runs away.*)

V

ALONG THE PILGRIM WAY

Ne no hi suru nobe ni medetashi tera no kado.

I love to wend my way towards some country
temple's gate on a holiday.

ON the far outskirts of Tōkyō, away from the restless turmoil and bustle of the Tōkaidō,¹ is the little village of Oi. It was there we stopped one morning in late April in front of the only tea-house, to gaze meditatively across at the cryptomerias encircling the tomb of the great Prince Ito. With unexcelled genius, this Bismarck of Japan transformed his country from a mediæval Asiatic despotism into one of the great constitutional powers of the world. Only the poetry of imagination could have inspired so perfect a tribute as this memorial tomb. Piece by piece Japan pulled down the palace room in which, after a year of wearying labor, Prince Ito wrote the constitution which was to bring such glory to his country, and rebuilt it exactly as it was during the Prince's lifetime,

¹ This famous main highroad is known to all lovers of color prints through the works of Hiroshige and Hokusai.

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

consecrating it as the shrine for his "couch of everlasting sleep."



After some moments our attention was attracted to an aged man, who had been half reclining on one of the long bamboo tables that serve as seats. His kindly face was deeply furrowed with heavy lines—"dry beds of old smiles"—that gave promise of a hidden crop of sweetness. He slowly puffed at his tiny pipe, as he too gazed across at the dignified cryptomerias.

The sound of our automobile had aroused the old man from his reveries, and he soon made ready to continue his pilgrimage. But we delayed him to ask in faltering Japanese the distance between Tōkyō and Yokohama, "*Tōi desū ka Yokohama kara Tōkyō made wa?*"

Still with a far-away, reflective look in his eyes, though instinctively drawing in his breath with that sibilant sound that is a sign of respect, he replied, "Is the honorable automobile going in today's sunshine?"

We were already off the main highroad, and had no wish to remain at Oi.

ALONG THE PILGRIM WAY

“Look not so bewildered, *Ō gwaikoku-jin!*” continued the old man. “Though I am but a pilgrim seeking the healing touch that Buddha alone can give, I have studied deeply. Do you not remember that Æsop, the Greek fabulist, to similar inquiry once replied, ‘Are you coming or going?’ In rain the Tōkaidō is deserted, and one may go quickly; but on days of sun, it becomes the nursery of the poor and those devoted to their children.”

After a meditative pause the aged pilgrim continued: “It is not so here, *Ō gwaikoku-jin*. In this village is perfect contentment. Only last night when the sunlight had faded and rose evening had given way to purple night, gradually darkening, from deeper and still deeper purples to inky blackness, as I watched, the moon suddenly showed her face, whitening the road as with a blanket of frost, silvering the tomb across the way, bringing light to everything except to the ever-dark pines that etched fantastic patterns against the sky. I ran out into the street for a better view, and stumbled against a blind masseur whose ‘peddling sleep’ flute for the moment was silent. Was he angry that I jostled him? Not at all. He only smiled. The beauty of the night was so great

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

that he too felt it and rejoiced with me even from the depth of his darkness."

Another pause and he continued: "You find me, as all old men, over talkative. Yet what can be the good of growing old if one cannot talk and with the wisdom of years teach others? Only too well I know that there is still much to learn.

"But alas, I am becoming as a *samisen*, the strings of which, broken by the heavy hand of time, can no longer make sweet music—only noise. I can only say, *Sayōnara!* May you grow as old as the pine and as strong as the bamboo! *Sayōnara!*"



Again we were on our journey. But as is the way with youth and occidental pilgrims in a strange land, we disregarded the words of the sage, only to learn the way of wisdom for ourselves. All along the highway, from the miniature houses and toy shops, built flush with a street that has never known a sidewalk, there constantly darted hurrying figures, little children and mothers carrying still more children held fast to their backs by "bonds of cotton

ALONG THE PILGRIM WAY

and blood.” If two such “mothers” happen to meet in mid-road, even though they may have met many times before that very day, they stop all traffic while they salute one another in accordance with immemorial etiquette. They bow so low to the ground that it almost seems as though they would break in two. As they lean forward, the startled babies tied to their backs come face to face for a hurried introduction, only to lose sight of each other when the mothers straighten up. Down again the mothers bob, and the babies, now fully awake, crow with delight at this friendly game of hide-and-seek. Another disappearance, and then a third and last bow, less prolonged, giving only time for a hasty good-by smile, when the babies fall again into forgetful sleep.

To add to the picturesque tangle, many slow-moving ox-drawn carts crowd the already overburdened road. Undisturbed by the automobile’s “honk,” the drivers, who always walk beside the horse,—riding a loaded wagon is contrary to law,—seldom give way. They are oblivious to everything—except, perhaps, the insane, for whom the street is also an asylum, or the blind man who tap-taps his way through the congestion in perfect security.

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE



Along this very road come also pilgrims, like the old man whom we had left in Oi, who are seeking further knowledge in the silent peace of great temples, where forever lingers the spirit of their beloved Buddha, Lord of Lords. In the distance is seen Hommon-ji, the temple built around the spot where died the militant Saint Nichiren, the dreamer of a Buddhist Catholic Church with Japan as the holy see of Buddhism. Nichiren offered his life as pledge of sincerity, and as "sincerity is religion personified," the people testify their faith by flocking to his shrines.

Upon a huge lotus flower of stone is built Hommon-ji's Holy of Holies, enshrining a reliquary that stands on a jeweled table supported by eight green tortoises. Within is a priceless rock-crystal jar that treasures the bones of the saint. In front, eternally burns a lantern symbolizing the light of Buddhism that is supposed to dissipate the clouds of delusion, just as the sun, the source of all light, each day in its eternal journey chases away all shadows in the temple, mingling with the gold of the walls in a splendid blaze of glory.



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PIGEONS OF HOMMON-JI TEMPLE

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

Tonight, when the sky is star-sprinkled, there will sway up the worn steep steps leading to the temple a living ladder, each pilgrim carrying a lighted lantern and chanting the sacred formula, "*Namu-miō-ho-ren-ge-kyō! Namu-miō-ho-ren-ge-kyō!*" When the hour comes for separation, with many blinking salutations the lanterns will scatter like fireflies, and a great peace will curtain the land.

五

From Hommon-ji the pilgrims journey to Kawasaki, where stands the famous temple dedicated to Kōbō Daishi, who preaches a different Buddha. Each, 'tis said, may fix his eyes on a different star, but in the end all see the same light.

Centuries ago, during a visit to China, Kōbō, unable to carry home a much desired statue of Saint Daruma, prayerfully consigned it to the mercy of the waves, and straightway it floated towards Japan. More than a year later, as some fishermen in the village just below were pulling in their net, they were noticed to smile in happy anticipation, so heavy seemed the

ALONG THE PILGRIM WAY

catch. Once drawn up on the beach, the great net was found to contain, not fish, but a splendid god-image. In terror the fishermen threw themselves upon the sands, hiding their faces, until a voice was heard ordering them to lift up the sacred figure and carry it farther ashore. This they did, when many miracles took place. And the people built the temple which endures to this day.

From all parts of Japan come pilgrims seeking a reproduction of this Daruma god, whose squat figure, as a toy, is familiar to all children. No matter how hard they try to throw it over, it always bobs up in a sitting position, with an odd mixture of triumph and dignity.

Daruma, according to sacred legend, sat cross-legged for nine years, absorbed in contemplation. During this period of meditation he was femininely tempted as was Saint Anthony, but he never moved, not even stirring when rats gnawed away his ears. At the end of his nine years' penance, Daruma's legs were found to have withered and fallen off. His eyelids he lost in self-punishment. One time he permitted himself to be overpowered by sleep. On awakening, he was so filled with

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

shame and self-contempt that he seized a knife and slit off the sleep-offending lids, casting them from him. They took root where they fell, and there at once appeared a wondrous bush, called tea, the leaves of which have the magic power to drive dull sleep from overweary eyes.

Every Buddhist devotee is presented with a small statue of this miraculous Daruma, painted a brilliant red, except for the face, which is left white and is without any eyes. At home, it is placed upon the god shelf, there to be the object of daily prayer. Should some prayer be answered, one eye is painted in Daruma's blank face so that the god may see the good he has done. On response to a second prayer, a second eye is given him. Now blessed with two eyes, Daruma's image is carried back to the temple, to be presented as a thank offering, and a new image is given the worshiper in exchange. According to popular belief, images of holy persons become alive when their eyes are opened by the priests, thus permitting them to see; and reward or revenge ensues, according to the treatment the god has received from the hands of the votary.

六

Most of Japan's picturesquely beautiful places are shared with Buddhist gods. They have studded the country with seventy-two thousand temples, that fill the air with the melody of sweet-toned bells. Nearly every mountain-top is made more inviting by mossy steps that climb to some shrine.

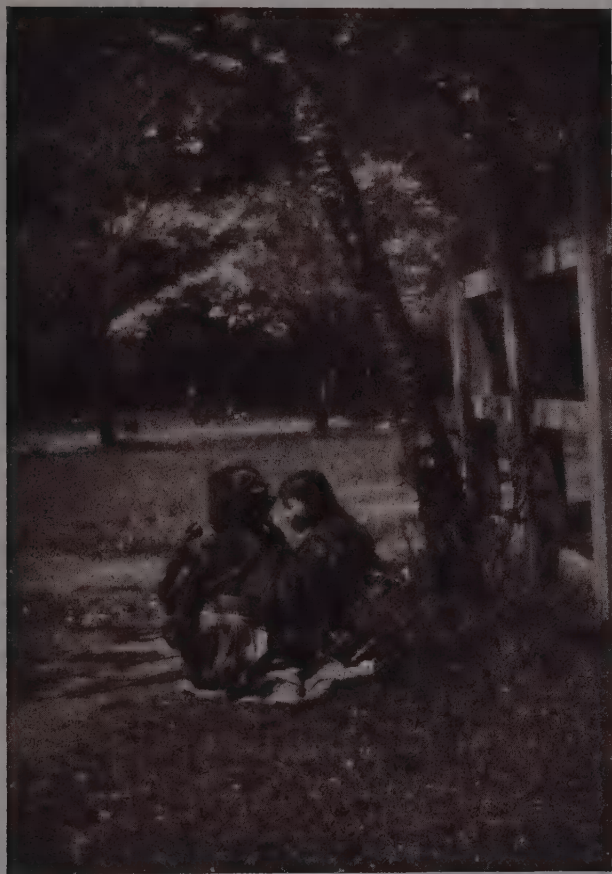
Buddhism shares with Roman Catholicism a pretension to hilltops in the belief that they serve to carry the eye up and ever upward. As in Roman cathedrals, some of these temples are magnificently adorned with all the beauty and skill known to the lands of Buddhist power, offering to an artistic people art's highest expression, in the hope that through the windows of the senses they may look into the soul of things.

Though born over five hundred years before Christ, Buddhism did not reach Japan until a thousand years later, just at the dawn of her civilization and during that plastic period when she could be so easily moulded. Planted on practically virgin soil, it has influenced Japan's every social and intellectual activity. For cen-

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

turies every birth and death in every family had to be registered at some Buddhist temple, and all burial services were conducted by Buddhist priests. When the heart was sick and sorrowing for some dear one, comfort was sought at the foot of Buddha, and his priests were the chosen ones to pray for the repose of the souls and to soothe the bitterness of death. It was in such impressionable periods of grief that Buddhism took still firmer root, and today, except for agnostics and some two hundred thousand professing Christians, almost every Japanese—except Royalty—is a Buddhist.

Buddha is claimed neither to be a god who has revealed himself, nor one sent by God to bring salvation; but a man so far above ordinary men and so spiritually and morally superior to erring suffering humanity as to resemble God. Buddha is a state of self-enlightenment, the symbol of a man who, by his own exertions, attained supreme knowledge and moral perfection, finding eternal peace by the free renunciation of the lusts of life. "From pleasure comes grief, from pleasure comes fear. He who is free from the love of pleasure knows neither grief nor fear." Every man must be his own redeemer; each must himself make the effort;



WITHIN A TEMPLE GARDEN

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

the Buddhas are only proclaimers of the truth.

Buddhism teaches one to master regret, to endure pain, and to accept the vanishing of all things most loved. Its background is unchanging fate—"That which hath been is that which shall be." The world is but a delusion in which man must suffer a long chain of reincarnations, an endless series of rebirths, each succeeding existence the result of actions good or bad in preceding states, until at last the purified soul merges in divine and realized calm, able to live in this sinful world as the spotless leaf of the lotus, unsoiled by the mud in which it grows.

Today there are more sects in Buddhism than in Christian Protestantism, and they are even more widely divergent in belief. At one extreme is absorption in Nirvana—practical annihilation; at the other, a Western Paradise, that can be gained through the constant repetition of the name of Amida. He it was who, as a monk, lived a perfect human life, being so moved with pity for suffering humanity that he vowed not to abandon it until, by infinite suffering, he had heaped up merit sufficient to save all mankind.

With a chameleon-like accommodation, Bud-

ALONG THE PILGRIM WAY

dhism has taken color and shape from every country through which it has passed. This, in part, explains its superficial resemblance to Roman Catholicism, with its similar splendid ritual, the common use of incense, graven images, processions, and candle-lit, flowered altars, at which tonsured priests, in magnificent robes, chant the service.

And may not the practical result be the same? As some sweet-minded Buddhist prostrates herself before the statue of the God Amida, humbly and earnestly praying, who dares deny that her voice will reach Heaven? The Roman Catholic who prays to a figure of Christ, bows his head in precisely the same way, and both have found alleviation for aching and credulous hearts. Was it not Renan who said, "Religion is merely a device to bring peace of mind in the midst of things as they are"?

Possibly afraid of the encroachment of the Christians upon their especial sphere, Buddhists are today showing a strong tendency to copy every branch of Christian activity. Thus stimulated, they have borrowed many of the Christian methods, establishing theological universities, mission schools, reform and prison societies, hospitals, and orphan asylums.

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE


The Japanese argue that the recent European tragedy was nothing but a return of Christianity to barbarism, and if Christianity can be born again to save its world from universal unrest, why cannot Buddhism do the same for Japan? To their logical minds Christianity must compromise with Buddhism, and they see in the future either a Buddhized Christianity or a Christianized Buddhism.

A federation formed by the leaders of the Buddhist, Shintō, and Christian religions in Japan is being heralded as the first step in the eventual unity of these three great faiths in this country. The Religious Fellowship Society, as the new federation is called, was organized with a view to promoting mutual understanding among the three leading religions in Japan and gaining the cooperation of all in spreading the gospel of righteous living. Although the unity of the three great faiths was not the primary purpose of the federation and was, indeed, far from the minds of most of the instigators of the association, nevertheless, the move is being looked upon by many responsible leaders in each of the three as a forerunner of the convergence of Buddhism, Shintōism, and Christianity in Japan.

VI TO FUJIYAMA

*Hisakata no kumo no usuginu Yuki bōshi Moyō
matsubara Mo to, zo kaku Fuji.*

A graceful bride, O Fuji!
With trailing garment of tinted clouds
Embroidered with pattern of pine,
And a wedding cap of snow.



BUT not alone within the temples does the soul of the Japanese pilgrim seek peace; he finds it in abundance in flowered Kamata, Yokohama's nursery garden, holding communion with its fields of iris. Kamata's dazzling feast of color shades from pure white through every nuance of mauve and lilac to rosy purple, and blues so deep as to be almost black. When the sunlight fades, the deeper purples lose their richness and grow shadowy white; then the white blossoms take on an icy purity that seems unearthly, and their spiritual beauty draws one's thoughts to things supernal.

Fortunately, disappointment seldom cures expectation, else in the dreary drabness of Yokohama would be found immediate recovery from

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

the usual dream anticipation of an exotic East. Here are a mass of Western-built, dull, gray houses; a polyglot population; an alien seaport that, to ensnare the entering thousands, is baited with an entangling mesh of cheap and sordid attractions. Except for the piercing, staccato chatter of the natives, the coolie-drawn 'rikishas, and kimono-clad figures, Yokohama might well be the water-front of anywhere.

二

In 1853, when Commodore Perry knocked, with loaded revolver, on the door of Japan, finally bursting the lock that had held the door against all foreign intrusion for more than two centuries, Yokohama was little more than a handful of miserable fishing hovels. It was scarcely a name. In fact, the first treaty between Japan and a Western power resulting from Perry's "neighborly" visit, though signed on the beach of present Yokohama, is called the Treaty of Kanagawa. The city's one claim to glory, aside from being a station on the Tōkaidō, is that it was the birthplace of the jinrikisha. This "Pull-man" car—to borrow another's wit—was the invention of an Ameri-

TO FUJIYAMA

can missionary, who converted a baby-carriage into a vehicle for his invalid wife.

Historians tell us of the wild furor and excitement caused by Perry's four black ships, sent in response to a protest from America's merchant marine, to insist that Japan's seaports should be open to ships in distress. We are told with what incredible rapidity the news of their coming spread over the Island Kingdom; of how shell trumpets and alarm drums sounded from castle towers and the country was threaded with naked runners carrying messages to distant towns. Soon the sands of Yokohama were blackened by visiting thousands, not one of whom had ever seen a foreign ship or a foreign man, and, probably, never so odd a procession as that arranged by Perry.

Two tall, heavily-armed Negroes, carrying the official pennant, marched in front; after them walked the Commodore and the ship's officers in gaily-epauletted uniforms; next came the marines with drawn swords; then a military band blaring "Yankee Doodle" with all the power of brass and drum; these were followed by sailors, whose naked cutlasses guarded the presents sent by America's President to the Ruler and Princes of Japan.

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

How curious in retrospect seem these presents: The Annals of Congress; History of New York; Bird Life in America; A List of the United States Post Offices; A Geological Report on Minnesota; and a Farmer's Guide. Together with these was an assorted lot of iron stoves, china teapots, ten-cent boxes of tea, clocks, perfumery, much champagne, and many barrels, casks, and demijohns of Kentucky rye!



Though an American opened the door of Yokohama, the first settler was an Englishman, who promptly marked his house and lot "Number 1." The second settler, who happened to choose a piece of ground far removed from the first, called his house "Number 2." And every subsequent settler used the next succeeding number, irrespective of location, until the result was a rather mystifying system of street numbering that has always clung to Yokohama—as have the early names of "Treaty Port" and "Mississippi Bay."

This Mississippi Bay, a sheer precipice falling steeply to the sea, offers one of those far-reaching views that remains lastingly etched

TO FUJIYAMA

on the plate of memory. The water-front looks like some immense spider web, spun of acres of black fishing nets thrown over bamboo poles to dry. In its meshes are seemingly entrapped the archaic junks that, ebon with age, have been pulled to their death-beds on the sandy beach; and the hundreds of weather-beaten, bare-legged women, with drowsing babies strapped to their backs, restlessly moving about in search of clams, look as if struggling to break through the imprisoning threads.

For a single instant the sun suddenly breaks through the clouds, scattering a million diamonds over the waters, and with dazzling light whitens the sails of the distant fishing junks. For another instant a mist-veil drops low, and above the shallow sea of vapor there float huge, oblong sails, apparently bodiless. Then all is blotted out. Gray sky and gray sea mingle into gray oneness.

Nearly four hundred years ago Kanō Motonobu, who, in Japan, is held in the same veneration as is his contemporary Raphael, in Europe, came here to paint this "plain of Heaven." His memoirs relate that after laboring all one long day over his silken canvas, at nightfall he saw how imperfectly he had caught the at-

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

mosphere of this spectacular beauty, and in disgust threw away his brush. The hill upon which he sat has come to be known as *Fudesute*—to throw brush. How unemotional an imagery! And yet no people in the world feel so keen an emotion in the face of nature as do the Japanese.



Of near-by Kamakura little remains but the sands upon which it once stood. Japan's frequent and devastating tidal waves have left in their path only relics and memories of its former splendor—some few temples and that unique statue of Buddha, Daibutsu, which for seven centuries has sat unmoved, his eyes of gold looking out as calmly upon death as upon life.¹

Seated upon a huge lotus leaf, he rises from out a sea of foliage in a garden of gnarled and flowering trees that sway in the ocean breeze, heavy with salty odors. From braziers of bronze mount continuous threads of blue in-

¹ In September, 1923, when the sleeping earthquake giant, who lived in the center of the world, once again turned and tossed in terrifying nightmare, rocking the earth and upsetting great buildings, as would some mischievous child angered with his toys, Daibutsu moved shoreward five feet, without displacing one single foundation stone or in any way losing his immovable, eternal composure.



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THE DAIBUTSU BUDDHA, KAMAKURA

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

cense that unfold in flowerlike form, their filmy smoke-petals, breeze-driven, almost covering Buddha's eight hundred silver curls. These curls are symbolic of the friendly snails, which protectively coiled themselves upon the living Buddha's head when, one hot day, lost in meditation, he was in danger of sunstroke.

This majestic bronze figure of Daibutsu portrays the infinite peace and calm that so truly express Buddhist doctrines. Not a single line of face suggests a quiver of life; no line of body, the least movement; only silent, eternal meditation, until all thoughts are old thoughts, all knowledge has been mastered, every passion has been subdued, and out of the storm of life has emerged absolute repose. Yet do not the half-closed, heavy-lidded eyes, that throughout the ages have looked out upon life with such indulgent understanding, show a trace of the humor so akin to pity, even while expressing all that is tender and most beautiful in the soul of the Orient—mystery and infinite patience born of suffering?

More than ever awe-inspiring is Daibutsu in the vague glow of early night, when the silence is broken only by the murmur of the wind through the pines or the deep-toned bells of

TO FUJIYAMA

the temple of Hachiman. It is Hachiman that deifies the Emperor Ōjin Tennō, son of the Illustrious Empress Jingo who conquered Korea in the third century and whose victory is claimed to be due to the divine spirit of her unborn son whom she carried in her womb during the three years' siege. Upon Ōjin's birth, he became the patron saint of the fighting clans, and is today worshiped in Hachiman shrines as the God of War.

五

Among other decaying temples that are surrounded by splintered gravestones and old images of forgotten gods and buried in tangled vegetation, there is one where the buildings have been battered into almost formless ruins by the gales of centuries. Rank bamboo grass has been allowed to shut in the once massive entrance, showing, not alone the neglect of man, but the cruelty of nature. The superstitious Japanese believe this temple to be haunted, and they pass it with trembling steps and averted faces, repeating the sinister tale that led to its desertion only in half-whispers.

Once it was a "Mecca" temple, thronged by

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

visiting thousands, all seeking to satisfy their hungering souls. At the feet of its high priest, whose ascetic life caused him to be worshiped as a saint, they sought the answer to their golden dreams. But the fates spun a deadly web around this holy man. The beautiful abbess of the adjoining convent became so seriously ill that her death was hourly expected. Upon her asking that a priest be summoned to administer the last absolution, the temple's high priest responded. Instead of dying, this lovely abbess slowly recovered, and, being often visited by the priest during her convalescence, became deeply impressed with his saintly perfection. Later, forgetting their vows, the two fell in love with each other and hid themselves in one of the secret apartments of the vast temple.

But the time came when the priest was seized with remorse. Long brooding led him to the belief that this beautiful, self-sacrificing woman was a devil in feminine form sent to tempt him from the paths of virtue. One awful night, in a fit of rage and desperation (though, as the native chronicle relates, only after she had lain once more in his arms), he hacked her lovely body into a hundred bits and then, beside the mangled remains of the woman he had so

TO FUJIYAMA

greatly loved, and with the same sword, committed harakiri. The peasantry still believe that his spirit hovers about the temple, vainly seeking a resting place for his agonized soul, and no one dares to approach.

六

Through the trees comes the distant flash of the ocean, and, farther away, the spectral shore of the picture island, Enoshima—a warm streak of green bordered by broad pale lines of sand.

In the dark ages a monster sea-serpent terrorized the opposite shore, carrying off as food all the baby children. When, in utter despair, the people decided to offer prayers and presents to the heavenly Lady Benten, goddess of Good Luck, in quick response she sent a mighty earthquake, and from over the very spot where lay the serpent's cave, there emerged a beautiful island, bearing aloft on its eminence the goddess herself. So radiant was she that the sun paled before her. Enveloped in dazzling robes of light, she slowly descended the hill and entered the rocky retreat. According to the legend, she put an end to the dragon's crimes—by marrying him.

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

Enoshima is loosely tied to the mainland by a long, winding, fragile bridge, over which flows a ceaseless stream of pilgrims, priests and peasantry, and fisher-folk. Down the island's precipitous slope tumble two avalanches of houses, built on top of one another, the foundation of one higher than the roof of the one next below. Between them climbs a quaint, straggling street, a street of leaps and bounds, at times a stairway, again little more than a ladder. Along both sides, to attract the unhurrying, is a jumble of shops,—from which come laughing invitations to buy,—and at almost every landing-place is a restful tea-house.

Higher and higher mounts the path, shaded by age-battered trees. Now and then a wayside shrine invites the prayerfully inclined—and there is sure to be at least one figure kneeling before it. At the top, where stood Bente of the legend, is now a temple of indefinable age, from whose overhanging roof drops a bell with which the credulous summon the goddess. Here, sheltered from the winds and tempests, seemingly safe from the hatreds and passions of life, with nothing but hoary Buddhas and trees whose trunks frame pictures of distant sea and sky, one senses the peace of a cloister.

TO FUJIYAMA

Down among the rugged naked rocks barring the sea, is one long, coiling cave, once the serpent's lair, now a cavern shrine for the conquering goddess. At the extreme end, faintly lighted by flickering torches, can dimly be seen a woman's figure seated on a rock, around which, in submission, twines a serpent.

Today the surf outside makes a soft lowing as it swells and then dies away with long-drawn sigh. But when maddened by the wind, the waves hurl themselves upon this rocky coast, snarling and grabbing at the cavern opening with claws of white, spitting an angry, impotent spume over the image of Benten.

七

The long, pine-grown island of Enoshima soon melts into the wonderful Japanese atmosphere, leaving nothing but a ghostly line that harmonizes perfectly with the transparent colors of sea and sky. Nature, fickle as a woman's mood, now discloses a superb and solitary peak, luminously exquisite and dreamily white. It hangs like an eternal pinnacle of snow, poised between heaven and earth. Snow-curtained Fuji dominates the entire landscape. Everything,



UNDER THE SHADOW OF FUJI-SAN

TO FUJIYAMA

apparently, leads up to it, even the trees seem to bend towards it, while the surrounding waters caressingly carry its reflection on their bosom.

But though Fuji entirely dwarfs everything about, there is a splendid skyline of hazy hills upon whose highest peak, above a flight of brown-stone steps, slumbers the temple dedicated to the Rain-god. During the critical days of rice farming, thousands of the peasantry climb up this rugged mountain-path to implore the god for the requisite rain. In basins of red clay, flickering lights kindled from the purest oil are banked about the holy image, and from the lips of the kneeling toilers comes the same prayer: "We have beaten drums and lighted fires, O holy One, lest the land should thirst. Deign, out of thy divine pity, to send us rain!"



Into the noisy streets of Oiso, a few miles farther on, comes the moaning of another temple bell, carrying the melancholy of the winds and the sadness of the pines. Green and heavy with age, this temple crouches close to the desolate shore of Shigitatsu-Sawa, a dismal, gloomy

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

swamp, to whose banks monster trees have come down to die. This temple is dedicated to a poet priest, who, one autumn evening, while standing here, gave expression to the sorrows of life in a poem which today hangs beside its altar:

Tho' from the world I've turned my face,
My soul's life's sorrow fill,
This autumn eve, as slowly I pace
By Shigitatsu-Sawa still.

In a country where Nature shows herself so temperamental, how can her children escape a like disposition? Does it not perhaps give the key to that seemingly paradoxical Japanese character, where stoicism and emotionalism live side by side? Behind their inexpressive countenances is an emotional nature closely bordering on the sentimental.

九

The Tōkaidō now winds between rows of wind-swept pines alive with fantastic play of branches, across sluggish rivers where squatting figures whip their garments against big flat stones, and then on to the village of Yumoto,

TO FUJIYAMA

whose name means "source of hot water." Here was discovered the first of Japan's thousands of hot springs, doctors to which the poor throng when needing medical treatment. Patients in all stages of ill health are to be seen naïvely walking to and from the baths without clothing—and without impure thoughts. "In Japan the nude is often seen but never looked at."

The fountainhead of these boiling geysers is on the shoulder of the mountain, always covered with a greenish, yellow mist. The ground is pockmarked with hundreds of forgotten scars, the half-healed wounds of Earth's passion, still grumbling and growling in the rocky crevices of this "hell" into which a single false step would surely send one.



How different from that scene of desolation is the curving road up Hakone's flank, beautified by many waterfalls and gossip little streams that foam down with such a splendid rush of liberty, all leaping to their union with the great river below.

And what a wild profusion of flowers!

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

White and rose petals everywhere—in the gardens, on the brown thatched roofs, under foot, in the hands of pedestrians, springing from rock fissures, carpeting the hillside with every pastel shade. These peach and plum trees, unlike the unfruitful cherry, are cultivated both for their fruit and their symbolism, the peach signifying longevity, and the plum, womanly virtue.

The splendid military road slowly creeps higher and higher, each turn and twist, like some Gargantuan cinema, unreeling one exquisite view after another. The villages, for company, nestle closely together at the foot of the mountain. On their thatched roofs, silky as carpets of brown velvet, are grouped masses of iris, mauve and white, nodding to one another in the afternoon breeze. Iris is credited with strength-giving power, and weeks before the Boys' Festival (May 5) great bunches of the leaves—which, being sword-shaped, suggest the soul of a warrior—are placed on the roofs to catch the evening dew, which, according to tradition, gives added strength. Early on the morning of the festival this iris is brought indoors and immersed in the water with which the new-born son will be bathed. Thus he

TO FUJIYAMA

will absorb the essence of the flowers—the spirit of patriotism and valor.



The summit has been reached. A cloud rises; unfurls itself; mounts and fades in the azure, disclosing another white cloud-like mass plunging the heavens. Fuji's ghostly beauty, Venus-like, emerges from the foam.

No other mountain in the world, unless perhaps Olympus, that fabled home of the Greek gods, has been so worshiped and so celebrated by man. The very purity of its form—an almost perfect cone—makes it an easy model for every school of art, and every Japanese artist has reproduced it in one way or another. Alone, seemingly proud of its solitude, it soars from out the midst of a great plain; its head, white with snow, rests on the bosom of the sky.

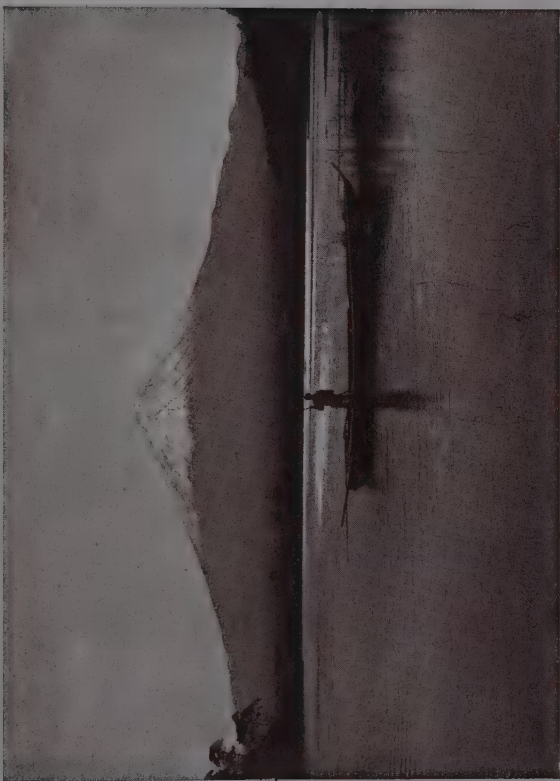
At the Ko-mitake Temple at Subashiri takes place the annual Shintō service which formally opens the climbing season. The shrine is dedicated to Sengen Sama, goddess of the mountain, who, according to ancient tradition, makes her yearly ascent of the mountain on July 11, and all persons who attempt to climb the sacred

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

mountain before the goddess leads the way will meet calamity. This is something to be reckoned with, as every Japanese feels in duty bound to climb Fuji at least once during his lifetime.

Lying about her feet like a string of scattered pearls is a circlet of blue-gray lakes that become Fuji's looking-glass in the early hours, when she casts off the mist of night. Slowly the mist drops to earth in a filmy mass, revealing a snowy vision, tinged with rose. For one provocative moment this reflected image floats on the mirror surface of the lakes; then Nature, as though jealous of Fuji's beauty, sends concealing clouds.

Of all these lakes it is at Shōji that Fuji-san most strongly plucks at your heart and binds you, a joyful prisoner to beauty. After daylight has vanished, when even the mountains look sorrowful, suddenly the moon will rise from behind the forest-jungle that borders the dark waters of the lake, letting her light dance with the shadows of the trees. A fairy has touched the world with her wand. All color has faded away. Silvery moonlight floods the open space where Fuji rises in chilly white, a spectral spirit, like love purified. Fuji sleeps.



THE WITCHERY OF FUJI

VII

TO THE HILL OF PEACE

Waga neta wo Kobe agete miru samusa kana.

Fresh from the land of dreams I raise my sleepy head;
but, ah! how disenchanting the morning seems!

THE witchery of Lake Shōji has lured many unhappy lovers to seek in this earthly Paradise the calm of death after storm-tossed days of seemingly unbearable trouble. According to the Japanese code of behavior, they are purified and redeemed by the fire of suffering and this final act of expiation.

They outsoared the shadow of our night;
Envy and calumny and hate and pain
And that unrest which men miscall delight
Can touch them not and torture not again.

So sang the poetess Ōzaki when describing the recent love drama in which two of Japan's modern writers ended their lives—Madam Hatano, a journalist, and Takeo Arishima, a noted author, probably the leading Japanese novelist. Both were prominently associated

TO THE HILL OF PEACE

with every modern movement in Japan, and their adoption of Japan's traditional manner of dealing with love's complex problems by committing *joshi*, double love suicide, has given rise to endless controversies. It is discussed not only as a tragic romance, but as a study of the different point of view which the East and the West bring to suicide, illustrating the strong influence still wielded by Japan's inbred time-old racial traditions.

According to the Japanese, suicide is not an act of cowardice. Death is beautiful for those who die for the sake of love. As life is one's most precious gift, the magnitude of the sacrifice makes death sublime.

Further, Buddhism teaches that it is not wrong to commit suicide so long as no wrong is done to others, man being perfect master of his own life. It is, to be sure, characterized as foolish, but its justification by the Japanese is the result of the combined beliefs in Shintō and Buddhism, for the most part, however, from the former. Shintō teaches that our present life is a period of eternity. We are bound in a "spirit box." By "death," our spirit is released.

Nevertheless, suicides for all manner and

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

kinds of reasons are daily recorded in the newspapers. A teacher will commit suicide as penance for an accident to some pupil under his charge; a student kept at school by his parents at great sacrifice to themselves, failing in his examination, will take his own life; a railway gateman, forgetting to close the barrier in time to prevent some lad from being crushed to death by a passing train, pays his debt to the boy's family by committing harakiri. And one writer goes so far as even to assert that a Japanese unable to attract attention to a cause in which he believes, will kill himself as a means of drawing notice to it, underlining, as it were, his protest in red.¹

To each, the old code speaks with the same absolute finality; to have a trust, to fail in its discharge, nothing remains but the last silent protest—harakiri.

¹ When, in 1924, it became officially known that the Immigration Bill, excluding Japanese from the United States, had been signed, a man of Tōkyō committed harakiri in the garden of the American Embassy, hoping that where living voices had failed, his appeal from the grave might move the heart of Washington. It was later reported that in recognition of this man's sacrifice he was to be buried beside Japan's greatest military heroes and statesmen, with elaborate ceremonies to be conducted by the National Funeral Society of Japan.

TO THE HILL OF PEACE



The beginning and the end of the Fuji pilgrimage, the clasp that holds together the two extremities of this rosary of devotion, is the little town of Gotemba, where long ago was played the last act of the famous Soga vendetta, almost as well known in Japan as the story of the Forty-seven Rōnin.

As related by historians of the twelfth century, a high officer in the court of Shōgun Yoritomo treacherously murdered the father of two young lads, Jūrō and Gorō Soga. Young as they were, they resolved to avenge the death of their father and, to use the words of the chronicle, they pursued this pious vendetta for sixteen years before the opportunity for vengeance arrived. In their honorable mission they were greatly aided by Tora Gozen, the elder brother's mistress, who, being a *shirabyoshi*—public entertainer of cultural accomplishments—with access to the Shōgun's household, was able to give these young men, always hiding and in constant danger of their lives, information as to their enemy's movements.

With this assistance the two brothers gained access to the assassin while he was on a hunting

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

expedition at the foot of Fuji, near Gotemba. It was late at night when they were able to enter his tent, and believing it cowardly to stab even such a miscreant when asleep, they awakened him and after a fierce fight managed to put him to death. In the encounter Jūrō lost his life, while Gorō was captured and condemned by the Shōgun to have his head hacked off with a blunt sword. Tora, on learning of her lover's death, took refuge in a convent and became a nun.

三

Gotemba, the scene of this tragedy, lies close to the "Valley of the Living Dead," at whose entrance, as at the portal of Dante's Inferno, might well be written "Leave hope behind, all ye who enter here." But the gilded sign that swings above the iron gateway carries instead the promising words, "Resurrection of Hope."

Those who fear not to venture within this stockaded hospital will wonder greatly at hearing the joyful laughter and even more at seeing the happy smiles that illumine the livid faces, hideous as gargoyles. At the sound of footsteps on the graveled walk that runs be-

TO THE HILL OF PEACE

tween two rows of wooden houses, fingerless hands and handless arms painfully drag aside the strips of matting that hang in front, and from within peer faces scabrously twisted into fantastic shapes, with eyes blotted out, mouths merely black gaps, and two grisly holes to replace the nose. They seem the masks of lost souls roused from distressful sleep, but, unbelievable as it may sound, the poor marred faces carry a look of ineffable peace.

The shame of their friends, driven from home, despised by all, obliged to renounce every earthly career, they find here a loving welcome as members of one family, where they are fathered by a splendid Catholic priest, a humble follower of one "who had compassion and put out his hand and touched the leper." And this noble man, without thought of self, is giving his life to his leper children.

This is the first leper hospital in Japan, where there are said to be over two hundred thousand of these miserable outcasts. For the most part they receive little governmental attention, being still regarded with a certain amount of indifference as the cursed of the gods and therefore pariahs, to be shunned and dreaded. However, they are never cruelly treated as in China, where

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

often lepers are herded into dreary mountain passes and left to become the prey of wild animals or to die of starvation. Very recently, according to report, several thousands of these unfortunates were invited to a barbecue by the governor of the Chinese province of Changsha. He gave them a great feast and much strong liquor. Then, surrounded by soldiers, they were driven to the edge of a pit, previously prepared, and mercilessly shot down, a holocaust to his barbarism.



It needed all the alchemy of the Sano Bakuen (Sano Falls) to drive away the gruesome memories of Gotemba. But, as at Lethe, the stream of oblivion, one drink of its entrancing beauty and there is at least temporary forgetfulness.

A mountain stream was playing hushed rhapsodies among encumbering reeds and tall grasses. The high cliff on one side was completely cloaked by a gossamer mist. From behind came the gay laughter of many waterfalls. Struck by the climbing sun, this screening veil was sharply brushed aside and the waterfalls

TO THE HILL OF PEACE

"splintering on a sunbeam changed into rainbows."

Melting Snow, Shimmering Moon, and Filmy Silk are the poetical names of these waterfalls, christened only recently by the Prince Regent, on his journey to the beauty spots of Japan. In commemoration of this visit, a pine tree, the symbol of long life and the emblem of happiness, has been planted in front of the "Beauty Viewing Pavilion." This custom is followed at each and every one of the Prince's stopping places.

"Through spring and summer, autumn and winter, under deepest snow and for a thousand years, the pine biddeth green," say the poets. And should one of the pine trees planted in commemoration of the princely visit die before its accepted time, the peasantry will believe that it has given its life to lengthen that of its Prince.

五

The Tōkaidō here gives a sudden double twist and takes the name Hidari-Fuji—Viewed-from-left-side Fuji. Why? Due to the sharp turn, the sacred mountain appears for a moment on

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

the left side rather than upon the right, where it naturally belongs. Quite reason enough in Japan.

With polite bow and reverential hiss, this apparent anomaly is always pointed out by the conductor of every passing railroad train, when all the passengers immediately scurry to the windows for another view. They first caught sight of Fuji hours before, only to lose it, find it again, pass it, and leave it behind. Now it reappears on the wrong side, if the gods are kind, in all its glory; ephemeral, though, for in another moment it will be veiled in mist.

Japanese railway cars are built much like American street-cars. Two long benches face one another, a kind of shelf, wide and flat, upon which, after a time, the passengers will squat like so many graven images. At the beginning of the journey all are uncomfortably seated, Western fashion, in polite concession to Europeans who have a mistaken idea as to how seats should be used. Everyone has requisitioned as much space as possible, piling it high with heaps of the national traveling bags—large handkerchiefs of silk, whose convenient elasticity accommodates itself to any size of bundle.

The married women are kimonoed in somber

TO THE HILL OF PEACE

dark colors, generally silver grays, with *obis* of dull lavender, making them look like dull-colored moths robed in the foldings of their own wings. The men for the most part are in American coats and trousers. Nearly all are bespectacled, and their gaping mouths disclose veritable mines of gold.

The geisha passengers wear finely embroidered crêpe of bright iridescent hues, that falls in soft waves below the stiff, tightly bound sash. Their shiny black tresses have been worked up with pounds of fat into a hair dough and molded into strange elaborate coiffures. When they pass, odors of perfume and powder stream out of them.

But it is left to the children, proud possessors of red kimonos with white butterflies flying gaily across the crimsoned surface, really to brighten the color scheme. With their long sleeves, little lacquered *geta*, hair cut straight across the neck, cheeks rosy with excitement, they always strike the gayest note.

The "guards," white-gloved, excitedly wave the signal for departure. The toy train begins to crawl, jogging along at ten or fifteen miles an hour, unless it be an express, when it sometimes rocks across space at twice that speed.

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

When well out of the station, the sound of shoes dropping to the floor is heard. Stockinged feet are drawn up on the bench. The men sprawl at full length, while the women crouch in any space left by the lords and masters, their feet concealed beneath them, their heads resting drowsily on the window sill.

Next to sleeping, these complacent Japanese eat. At every station there are provided little lunch boxes of thin white wood divided into compartments. These are filled with rice, shredded fish, and pickled lotus root. Then there are earthen pots containing tea, the covers forming the cups; and fish nets filled with oranges, bean cakes, and bananas. Soon the car floor suggests a neglected tenement alley. Orange peels, splintered boxes, spilled tea, broken china, banana skins, cigarette stumps, and discarded chop-sticks make a sickly mess that the train boy's periodical cleaning never cures permanently. Æsthetic Japan has its unæsthetic side.

六

The plaint of the near-by sea drowns all other sounds. Glittering waves lazily churn

TO THE HILL OF PEACE

into foam as they surge up the pebbly beach. Close to her front doorstep is a string of little towns, whose gray, thatch-roofed houses crowd to the water's edge, as if wishing to dip their feet in the breakers. Across the bay a wooded cape, fringed by graceful pines, thrusts its nose into the blue-gray sea. Mio-no-Matsubara, they call it.

In time long past a fisherman landing on this peninsula found a robe of feathers hanging on one of the pine trees. He seized it, to carry it off, when a beautiful fairy suddenly appeared and implored him to restore it to her, for without it she could not fly home to the moon, where she was one of the attendants who waited upon the thirty monarchs who ruled that sphere. At first the fisherman refused to grant her request, but, womanlike, she cried and after many tears and agonies of despair promised to dance for him one of the dances known only to immortals. Draped in her feathery robe, she danced beneath the pine trees while celestial music and unearthly fragrance filled the air. At length a gay, strong breeze caught her wings and carried her skyward until lost to view.

The pine of the feather robe still stands on

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

the outer beach; while in the Shintō shrine of Mio, to the confusion of unbelievers, hangs a piece of the original feather garment.

七

Every hill is covered with low, knob-like bushes that sweep down to the very roadside, their white waxy flowers perfuming the air. Young girls, gay in brightly colored costumes, are snipping young leaves, most of which, dried by fire and manipulated by hand until the virgin green changes to a dark olive purple, will find their way to America. This one province of Shizuoka produces nearly thirty million pounds of tea a year, which is but a third of Japan's total output. Ninety million pounds of tea! Small wonder that Japan has ennobled tea drinking into a religion of æstheticism and has written a "Holy Scripture of Tea," with punctilious instructions that "each leaf should fold like a mist rising out of a ravine and be wet and soft like fine earth newly swept by rain."

The Chinese first knew tea as medicine, claiming that one cup of the froth of this liquid jade would "relieve fatigue, delight the soul, and



A DUET

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

strengthen the will." They introduced it into Buddhist temples, where it served to keep the priests awake during the midnight devotions. But on reaching Japan, tea-drinking developed into a religious rite. The Buddhist monks drank out of a single bowl with the same reverence offered the holy sacrament. And a tinge of this religious sentiment clings even today to the national tea ceremony, which is not only a cult, but one of the refined amusements for Japan's aristocratic world, being taught in every school as one of the first requisites in etiquette for girls.



One thousand and forty steps cut into the living rock zigzaggedly climb to the top of the Hill of Peace. There await two Japanese, already on their knees, their foreheads against the earth. Rising, they lead the way through a twilight of evergreens, past moss-covered lanterns, over rough stepping-stones softened by a covering of dried pine-needles. This is called the first stage on the "Journey of Meditation," where connection with the outside world is broken.

TO THE HILL OF PEACE

Facing the most retired part of the garden and suggesting an idea of peaceful seclusion, is the tea pavilion. To enter, one must bend low and creep on hands and knees. This inculcates humility. The silence within is broken only by water boiling in an iron kettle that hangs from a bamboo crane. The only light comes from the glowing *furo* filled with burning charcoal of charred cherry twigs. When all is ready, the tea ceremony, according to a ritual written centuries ago, is celebrated with the fervor of a priest before an altar. The spoon with which the tea is taken from its lacquered canister is held in a certain prescribed way and raised before the eyes as if about to be sanctified. After using, the spoon is carefully wiped with a napkin of pure linen. The powdered tea is then mixed with boiling water, beaten to a frothy green, and poured into a cup of rare porcelain. This, together with a cloth of silk, is placed before the principal guest. He approaches it on his knees, raises the cup to his lips, takes three thoughtful sips, wipes the cup, and passes it to his neighbor—with an apology for having taken the first drink.

Rikyū was one of the founders of this tea cult, and he wrote the elaborate code of eti-

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

quette which has never varied since his day. He was a favorite of the great Hideyoshi, accompanying that general in all his campaigns in order to preside at tea parties in the interval between battles. Numerous are the stories told of the fatal quarrel between the two—one claiming that Hideyoshi ruined Rikyū's daughter, another that Rikyū was dishonest. The most plausible, however, is told by Kakuzo Okagura:

Long had been the friendship between Rikyū and Hideyoshi and high the estimation in which the great warrior held the tea-master. But the friendship of a despot is ever a dangerous honor. It was an age rife with treachery, and men trusted not even their nearest of kin. Rikyū was no servile courtier and had often dared to differ in argument with his fierce patron. Taking advantage of the coldness which had existed for some time between the two, the enemies of Rikyū accused him of being implicated in a conspiracy to poison the despot. It was whispered to Hideyoshi that the fatal potion was to be administered with a cup of tea prepared by the Master. With Hideyoshi, suspicion was sufficient ground for instant execution, and there was no appeal from

TO THE HILL OF PEACE

the will of the angry ruler. One privilege alone was granted to the condemned, the honor of dying by his own hand.

On the day destined for his self-immolation, Rikyū invited his chief disciples to a last tea ceremony. Mournfully, at the appointed time, the guests met at the portico. As they looked into the garden path, the trees seemed to shudder, and in the rustling of their leaves were heard the whispers of homeless ghosts. Like solemn sentinels before the gates of Hades stood the gray stone lanterns. A wave of rare incense was wafted from the tea-room, the summons which bade the guests to enter. One by one they advanced and took their places. In the *tokonoma* hung a *kakemono*, a wonderful writing by an ancient monk, expatiating upon the evanescence of all earthly things. The singing kettle sounded like some cicada pouring out his woes to departing summer. Soon the host entered. Each guest in turn was served with tea, and each in turn silently drained his cup, the host last of all. According to established etiquette the chief guest then asked permission to examine the tea equipage. Rikyū placed the various articles before them, together with the *kakemono*. After all had expressed their

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

admiration, Rikyū presented one to each. The bowl alone he kept. "Never again shall this cup, stained by the lips of misfortune, be used by man!" So he spoke, and broke the cup into fragments.

The ceremony over, the guests with difficulty restrained their tears, took their last farewell, and left the room. One only, the nearest and dearest, was requested to remain and witness the end. Rikyū then removed his tea-gown and carefully folded it upon the mat, thereby disclosing the immaculate white death-robe which it had hitherto concealed. Tenderly he gazed on the shining blade of the fatal dagger and in exquisite verse thus addressed it: "Welcome to thee, O sword of eternity through Buddha. Thou hast cleft thy way."

With a smile upon his face, Rikyū passed forth into the unknown.

九

Hideyoshi is perhaps the most notable figure in all of Japanese history. He worked his way, by sheer force of will and hard fighting, from a peasant's hut to a regent's palace—a position which only those of noble birth have occupied

TO THE HILL OF PEACE

before, or since. He is called the Napoleon of Japan, and, like Napoleon, combined many dramatically opposing qualities. Though a great warrior, he made himself absolute ruler of Japan and dreamed of becoming Emperor of the entire East. At the same time, he was an ardent promoter of the arts of peace and is most famous for having given the largest tea-party on record. The card of invitation was in the form of an official edict, and it is still preserved. By it, all lovers of Japan's tea ceremony were summoned to appear, and all who failed to attend were to be forever barred from taking part in any future ceremony. All who were invited came—so many, in fact, that the party lasted ten days.

Hideyoshi was born at near-by Nagoya, and the country hereabouts is replete with stories of his boyhood. The famous Yahagi Bridge is far more renowned as the place where, as a boy vagrant, he met the arch robber, Koroku, than as a bridge. The account of this episode has been written by a Japanese student of English:

“Hideyoshi was very poor altogether and had no place to sleep so slept on Yahagi Bridge. At midnight a great stealing man passed on the

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE


bridge and his feet touched Hideyoshi's feet. Hideyoshi waked up and speaked to stealing man. 'No right to do such things without apology!' Stealing man surprised for that small boy speaks like this. All bodies generally frightened at midnight when stealing man, and plenty men with, prowl around. Honoring small boy because he has plenty strong heart, stealing man did say apology and when he said them he go on. After long whiles that small boy grew up to be big Shōgun (ruler) and he called stealing man before him and made him *daimyō* and that *daimyō* was ever faithful to end."

VIII

NAGOYA

Susuke taru ujo ga kao yo asaborake.

Smoke from their torches soil the faces of the
fishermen after their long night's toil.



GUARDING the city of Nagoya are two golden dolphins, "so glitteringly bright as to frighten the very fish in the sea." With eyes of silver, they gaze coldly, watchfully, from the top of a donjon five stories high, one of the wonder castles of Japan, the land where most things are small and built on a small scale. To build this great castle, Iéyasu, the ruler of the kingdom, forced all the great princes to contribute their possessions and their services, and the splendid palace was finished in less than one year. This was a piece of craftiness on the part of Iéyasu, for he thus cunningly impoverished and weakened those feudal lords who were still faithful to his predecessor, Hideyoshi, under whom he had himself served.

But more wonderful than Iéyasu's castle is the Shrine of Atsuta, a suburb of Nagoya, where

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

is treasured the sacred sword, one of three divine precious things,—the jewel, the sword, and the mirror,—the regalia of Japan's emperors. "This sword has no equal in the world, and being the gigantic weapon that watches over the country, it is a thing of great dread, of which even to speak is a crime," so say the ancient chroniclers.

二

Before the beginning of the world of man, there existed numerous generations of gods, the last being a brother and a sister, Izanagi and Izanami, who, united in marriage, gave birth to the Sun Goddess, the Moon God, and to Susano-o.

Being sent down to earth one time, Susano-o happened upon an old man and woman, between whom sat a young girl. All three were weeping. Susano-o deigned to ask, "Who are ye?"

The old man replied, "I am an earthly deity."

"What is the cause of your crying?" inquired Susano-o.

"I had originally eight daughters," said the old man, "but the eight-tongued serpent has

NAGOYA

come for seven years, devouring them one by one until only one is left, and it is now the appointed time for him to come again, wherefore we weep."

"What is the serpent's form like?" asked Susano-o.

"It has one body with eight heads and eight tails, and its length extends over eight valleys and eight hills."

"Then," said the god to the old man, "do you distill some refined liquor. Also make a fence round about. In that fence make eight gates. At each gate a platform, on each platform a vat, into each vat pour the refined liquor—and wait."

So as they waited, having thus prepared everything in accordance with Susano-o's bidding, the eight-tongued serpent came truly as the old man had said. Immediately he dipped a head into each vat, and drank the liquor; thereupon, being intoxicated, all the heads lay down and slept. Then the god drew his sword that was augustly girded on him and cut the serpent in pieces, so that the near-by river changed into a torrent of blood. When he cut the middle tail, the edge of his august sword broke. Thinking this strange, he thrust into

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

and split the flesh—and there, within, was a great shining sword. This was the sword which, generations later, was presented by the Sun Goddess to her five-times-great grandson, Jimmu Tenno, the first mortal Emperor of Japan, 600 B.C.

When the country had arrived at the Heavenly rule of Sujin Tennō, five hundred years later, that Emperor, fearing to dwell in the palace with the divine precious thing, caused a noted swordsmith to forge an imitation, which he kept, and he sent the original to the Shrine of Ise. Now it happened that in the year 131 A.D., Yamato, the mighty hero, the “warrior prince,” went to pay reverence at the Shrine of Ise. His aunt, who was head priestess, besought that the divine sword might be handed down to him from the shrine, and so it came to pass. Yamato used the mighty weapon to subdue the country; after which it was brought to Atsuta, where a temple was built for its safe keeping.



All the way to Gifu the gold dolphins that crown the citadel of lofty Nagoya Castle will

NAGOYA

be kept in sight, unless blotted out by one of those sudden thunderstorms peculiar to all volcanic lands and especially to this rain-soaked country. Almost without warning dark gray clouds come rushing across the sky in vast and never ending battalions. Forming in battle array, they swoop down, spreading as they advance a barrage of blinding lightning. In a moment all is shrouded in darkness. The winds begin to sing a dirge among the trees, and the thunder roars with great organ notes amid the distant hills, which, as sounding boards, play their part in this elemental orchestra, echoing and reëchoing the deafening blasts. Only when the rain-sheets are momentarily torn aside can even a glimpse of the outside world be caught. But so ungovernable is the raging storm that it soon exhausts itself, and by early evening the Nagara River at Gifu is hardly wave-fretted.



Alongside the city's wharf waits a low, open sampan, one of Japan's flat-bottomed boats, gondola in form, the ends sharp and high-pointed. Amidships is a thatch-roofed shelter hung with gaudily colored lanterns. At the bow and

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

stern stand two weather-bronzed figures, naked except for loin-cloths, in readiness for the word to push off. Once the city is left behind, somber, thickly wooded hills enwrap the boat in darkness. The sounds of Gifu, softened by distance, die away into the hum of insects. Tiresome work poling against the strong, swift current, and the men soon throw aside their bamboo sticks, jump into the water, well over their shoulders, and tow the boat. It needs a full hour of alternate pushing and pulling to reach the meeting-ground of the visiting geisha boats, all brilliantly illuminated, each lantern casting on the black waters a bar of tremulous gold.

A hearty invitation to join them is shouted, for without geisha one must indeed be lonely. And then, almost at once, the cormorant fishing-boats appear in the distance, drifting with the current, in single file, and all voices are stilled.

A blaze of light streams from an iron basket swung on a high movable crane at the bow end of each of the on-coming boats. Filled with burning pitch-pine, it gives a dazzling flame, treacherously decoying the curious fish in such swarms that the water's surface is paved with silvery scales. Sharply outlined in the glare

NAGOYA

stands a man clutching in his left hand a dozen fiber reins, seemingly driving the cormorants spread out before him, fan-like. Save for these naked, copper-skinned figures with their twelve watery steeds tugging at iron collars, the Lohengrin swan-boats are in shadow.

The fishermen give a low, guttural call. In quick response the cormorants' bills strike the water with lightning rapidity, their entire bodies sinking out of sight. No sooner do they reappear than the commanding call sends them down again. By twos, by threes, sometimes by sixes, they dive. Again all twelve will float on the water's surface, straining at their reins.

Suddenly a bird is hauled aboard and with quick pressure at the base of the swollen throat is made to disgorge his catch. The cormorants wear about their long, snaky necks a metal ring, tight enough to prevent the passage of other than small, unsaleable fish. Each bird will catch four or five fish at every dive, perhaps two hundred an hour, and will continue until his gluttonous appetite is satisfied.

Down the current glide the boats, back to Gifu, where they are anchored. The ungainly birds are lined along the boat gunwales, most of them too drowsy with overfeeding even to

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

make their bedtime toilet. Some few, whom the owner finds under weight, are tossed deftly overboard and allowed to forage for themselves at the water's edge. Finally all are sent off to bed, where by rights the spectators should go. It is midnight past.

五

But a little way off the road out of Gifu one seems to see masses of gold and purple clouds floating down from the summit of the high hills. Water splashing from rock to rock has broken into a spray that is like a storm of flying snowflakes, each of which has caught the sunlight and shines with iridescent color. This is the famous Yōrō, the waterfall of filial piety.

In the early days of the Empire there lived here a woodcutter so filial that he would spend all his earnings, to the very last *rin*, on *sake* for his aged father, whose great passion was strong drink. As a reward for such exemplary piety the gods one day revealed that this cascade, supposedly water, was in reality a pure and wonderful wine. When the news reached the court at Kyōto, the Emperor himself honored the falls with a visit. He named his era

NAGOYA

Yōrō¹ and commanded the following *Nō* play to be written in commemoration.

CHARACTERS

An Imperial Messenger

Two followers

A man

An Old Man, his father

The God of the Mountain

Enter ■ Imperial messenger and two followers.

Three persons:

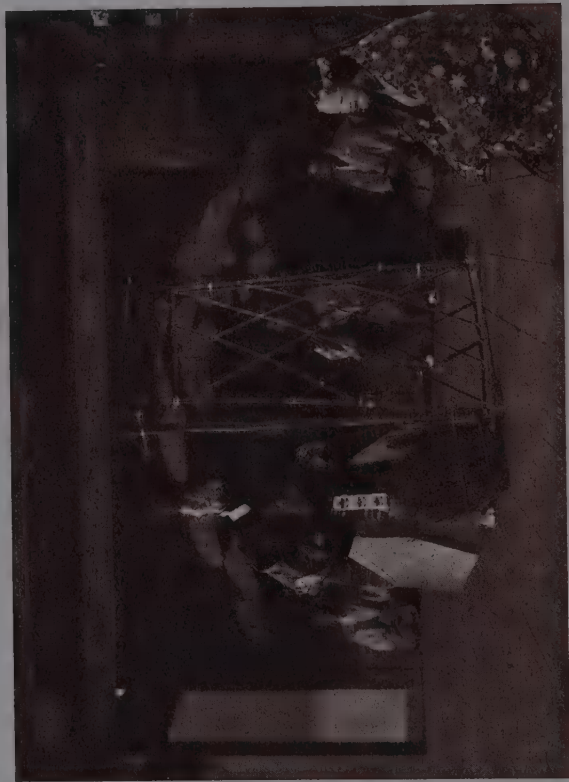
So gentle is the wind, so calm is it,
That e'en the leaves are not heard to rustle,
And the world is now at peace.

Messenger: I am a subject who serves the Emperor Yoryaku. It hath been reported to the Throne that there is a wonderful spring in the county of Motosu in Mino province, and in accordance with the Imperial command that I should go and ascertain the truth, we are hastening there.

Three persons:

It is a peaceful region: the country is rich,
And the people well off; forsooth well off.

¹ The Japanese have retained to this day the Chinese system of computation of time, under which years are reckoned ■ periods or eras.



A NÔ DANCE. ON PRANCING STEED, A MESSENGER
BEARING A LETTER IS SEEN APPROACHING THE
HEROINE, WHO SITS BEYOND THE GARDEN GATE

NAGOYA

There are ways, roads, and barriers ev'ry-
where,
In due time we have reached the Falls of
Yōrō.

Enter a man with his father.

Two persons:

Pure and blue is the water underneath
The ancient pine-trees in the mountain deep
of Mino.

Man:

We are accustomed to go
Up the old paths.

Two persons:

Indeed, we can with ease.

Old Man:

I have awakened from a dream—
A dream of sixty years. My heart hath
yearned

For the moon at a thatched cottage, and
My body hath been drifting on the frost,
Lying upon a wooden bridge, and snow
Hath fallen on my head; but my soul will
Be purified and mine old age fed by
The water of the cataract, which is
Never exhaustible.

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

All persons:

The House of Long Life,
'Tis said, hath a gate of eternal youth;
But here is water under the pine-trees,
Symbol of long life, which prolongs man's
life.

Messenger: I say, old man, I have something
to ask.

Old Man: Of me? What is it, sir?

Messenger: Are you the father and son they
speak of?

Old Man: Yes, we are.

Messenger: I am an Imperial messenger.

Old Man: Heaven be praised! How thankful
to receive an Imperial Messenger! I am
only a humble being. We are the father and
son you mention.

Messenger: It hath been reported to the Throne
that there is a wonderful spring in the county
of Motosu. In obedience to the Imperial
command that I should go and inspect it, I
have come here. In the first place, tell me
how it hath come to be called Yōrō.

Old Man: Certainly, sir. This is my son. He
goes up the mountain every day to collect

NAGOYA

fagots and provides for us. When he was once tired and thirsty, he drank of this water, and felt greatly refreshed.

Man: It is, so to speak, fairy water. I took some and gave it to my father and mother.

Old Man: After drinking some of it, I was so much refreshed that I forgot my age.

Man: I get up out of bed with a refreshed spirit.

Man and Old Man: And at night we don't feel lonely. We have called the waterfall "The Fall of Yōrō" (provision for old age), because the water refreshes old people.

Messenger: I feel more reverence towards the waterfall now that I have heard the reason. I suppose the medicinal water runs down from a certain part of the fall.

Old Man: Look there! It flows down from among the rocks this side of the basin.

Messenger (Draws near and looks): How pure!

Old Man: So transparent is the water that the rocky bottom is clearly seen.

Messenger: The medicinal water talks as if it could foretell the distant future.

Old Man: Indeed, it hath immediate effect.

Messenger: And invigorates old age.

Old Man: And refreshes.

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

All persons:

If it invigorates the old and weak,
It must do good to people in their prime!
What an auspicious spring! Forsooth, the
stream

Of the Imperial reign is so pure,
That e'en we who are humble can in peace
And plenty live. How happy we are now!
This wonderful spring will exist fore'er.

Old Man: I hear that Hosō lived for seven hundred years, owing to the miraculous influence of wine. While fed with wine, one might pass a thousand years. Trees and grass bloom and bear fruits, owing to occasional rain and dew. Fed with this water, I am glad to see my old form as fresh as the young water of the New Year.

Messenger: How wonderful is this medicinal water! I will hie back and report the details to our lord.

Both messenger and old man seem very much delighted awhile. Then, wonderful to tell, a flash of light comes down from heaven, the sound of the waterfall stops, music is heard, and flowers fall.

NAGOYA

God of the Mountain: Thank Heaven! As is usual with a peaceful reign, mountains, rivers, trees, and grass are quiet; the wind blows every five days, and rain falls every ten days; the sun shines bright.

All persons: A lord in his peaceful reign is a ship, and his subjects are water. Water can float a ship. A reign in which the subjects worship their lord will forever continue. If the upper part of a river is pure, the lower part will not be muddy. It is a very, very good reign. Let us return on our way. *Banzai!* Let us return on our way. *Banzai!*

六

“Yōrō” was one of the selections of the Kwanze Society, which, in early June, staged a performance in memory of their founder. This is, perhaps, the most noted among the five official schools of acting, whose performers are all direct descendants of the actors who played before the Ashikaga Shōguns, under whom the *Nō* was brought to its present high degree of perfection.

As decreed by world-old conventions, the Kwanze stage is of unpainted wood, open on

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

all sides except for the wall facing the audience. On that wall is painted a single pine-tree, symbolizing eternity. A long gallery or bridge, in front of which three living pines are planted at regular intervals, leads to the dressing-room on the left. Both bridge and stage are roofed like some exquisitely carved Buddhist temple.

There is neither curtain, nor scenery, nor stage setting. The *Nō* playhouse is a theater of fancy, where imagination plays the leading rôle.

Members and guests kneel on little cushions in box-like pews that surround the stage on three sides. All are dressed in much quieter costumes than usual; many are in somber ceremonial robes. There is not one bit of color to clash with the twilight atmosphere. The *Nō* sanctuary is wrapped in silence and grayness. The audience, with faces grave and thoughtful, open their librettos as the chorus of eight, robed in a blue-gray that tones into the general color scheme, take their places in two rows on the right of the stage. The musicians then enter and seat themselves against the back wall. They carry a flat drum set in a wooden stand that is ornamented with an enormous scarlet silk tassel, two other drums that are shaped like

NAGOYA

sand-glasses and held on the shoulder, and one flute.

The flute opens the performance, sending forth a ghostly cry, cursing modern civilization—and the present slips away into the past. The curtain at the end of the gallery leading to the stage suddenly puffs out as if blown by the wind, carrying with it a spectral figure. The weird shape glides in very slowly, with long intervals between each step and a pause at each of the three pine trees to mark a stage in his journey. Every motion has been decreed for centuries. The costuming is gorgeous, of mediæval cut, stiff with brocade and embroidery, a treasure of some museum.

The chorus now begins to chant a slow psalmody,—Gregorian in effect,—resembling the intoning of Roman Catholic priests. It informs the audience of what is taking place or has taken place; sometimes it moralizes on the fate or the mental attitude of the actor.

The flute sounds again piercingly—and then comes a ceaseless hypnotic drum-tap, punctuated with staccato, wailing cries that create an atmosphere of almost unendurable tension. The air is filled with half-articulate sounds—the sougning of winds among pines, the tolling

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

of distant bells, the stifling of sobs, the clang of war, and heart cries. All the unspoken thoughts of the actor are directed to the intelligence of him who listens.

The audience listen absorbedly, carefully following word by word the antique text lying on their laps, and each and every reference to classic poem or legend is immediately recognized and appreciated, becoming all the more beautiful with the perfume of a thousand suggestive memories.

七

"Sumidagawa" is the *Nō* dance now being played. A woman carrying a reed, to indicate madness, learns from a boatman on the Sumidagawa River that the child she has so long been seeking was drowned years ago. The songs, the orchestra, and the lines of the poem unite in the expression of an agonizing sorrow. The waves of the river, the rustle of the bamboos, and the stir of the wind murmur in concert the prayer of the dead to Amida. By degrees the strident and plaintive music grows louder and louder. But through the uproar the mother faintly hears the voice of her child

invoking Amida. Then the child suddenly appears to her as a spirit. Twice the mother tries to embrace it and twice it melts from her grasp and disappears.

The term "*Nō* dance" is decidedly misleading, as the play bears little resemblance to what is in Europe associated with the word "dance." As one facetious writer describes it, the *Nō* dance is no dance at all. To call it a ghost play, as is often done, is no more justifiable than to call it a priest play simply because originally it was the vehicle for Buddhist teaching and for the most part written by Buddhist monks. It might better be termed a lyric drama, for it is much like that of ancient Greece, depicting the mystery and the pathos of life with Grecian beauty and force. But at the best it is most difficult to understand. Listen to what Japan herself writes:

"Forget the theater and look at the *Nō*. Forget the *Nō* and look at the actor. Forget the actor and look at the idea. Forget the idea and you will understand the *Nō*."

The tragic solemnity of these *Nō* plays, that are followed by the Japanese, book in hand, as earnestly as the Western student reads his Wagnerian opera, is relieved by farces—*Kyō-*

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

gen, or mad words—that serve as a necessary relaxation.

One such *Kyōgen* tells the story of a samurai, blessed with a pretty but rather coquettish wife. They have a manservant who is hopelessly in love with the lady, but she favors a certain nobleman. One day the samurai receives an order to go to war. There is a most affecting parting between husband and wife. The lady pretends great sorrow, but in reality she is glad, foreseeing many happy days with her lover. As the tears will not come naturally, she dips her fingers from time to time in a cup of water hidden at her side beneath her robes. Noticing this, the manservant creeps near enough to whisper in her ear that unless she responds to his passion, he will teach her a lesson. The lady only laughs at him. Thereupon the man changes the cup of water for one filled with ink—and the lady's tears turn black.



From the wide-open jaw of the valley one plunges directly into a throat-like gorge deep into the hills that enclose lovely Lake Biwa. This "throat" was once barred at the village



LAKE BIWA

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

of Sekigahara by a police gateway that opened at sunrise and closed at sunset. No one was allowed to pass after dusk, and every traveler was strictly examined. The Japanese, as ever, poetical, call this old gateway the "Hill of Meeting."

Everything in this country would seem to be viewed through poetical or legendary glasses. Lake Biwa is locally described by merely giving a list of its most beautiful views:

The Autumn Moon Seen from Ishi-yama.

The Evening Snow on Hira-yama.

The Sunset Glow at Seta.

The Deep-toned Bells at Miidera.

The White Sails of Returning Boats at Yabase.

Sunshine with a Breeze at Awazu.

The Night Rain at Karasaki.

A Flight of Wild Geese at Katata.

And at the picturesque spot where the lake narrows to form a river, the long bridge of Seta, leading to Kyōto, is guarded by a Shintō shrine dedicated to the national hero, Tawara Toda Hidesato, who legendarily slew the giant centipede.

One day Hidesato sallied forth in search of adventure, for he was by nature a warrior and

NAGOYA

could not bear to be idle. Buckling on his two swords, he took his huge bow, much taller than himself, and, slinging his quiver on his back, started out. He had not gone far when he came to the bridge of Seta, that spans one end of beautiful Lake Biwa. No sooner had he set foot on the bridge than he saw lying directly across his path a huge serpent dragon. Its body was so large that it looked like the trunk of an old pine tree and entirely covered the bridge from side to side.

Hidesato's first feeling was one of fear, for he must either turn back or walk right over the dragon. Being a brave man, he went forward dauntlessly.

He had gone but a few steps when he heard someone call from behind. Turning, Hidesato saw to his surprise that the dragon had disappeared, and in its place stood a strange-looking man, bowing ceremoniously.

"I am the King of this Lake," said he, "and my home is in these waters just under this bridge. I am living in constant terror, for a monster mountain centipede enters my home each night and carries off some one of my family. In my distress I determined to ask the

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

help of a human being. For many days I have waited here in the shape of a dragon in the hope that some brave man would cross this bridge. But all who have come, on seeing me, have run away. You are a brave man, and I beg you to kill my cruel enemy."

Hidesato readily promised to do all he could. On reaching the palace of the Dragon King, he found a wonderful feast awaiting him. As soon as they sat down, jeweled doors opened, and ten lovely goldfish dancers appeared. Behind them followed ten red-carp musicians bearing *samisens*. The hours flew with music and feasting, and all thoughts of the centipede were forgotten. But just as the Dragon King was about to pledge the warrior in a fresh cup of wine, the palace walls were suddenly shaken as if a mighty army had begun to march.

Hidesato and his host rose to their feet and, rushing to the balcony, saw on the opposite mountain two glowing balls of fire coming nearer and nearer.

"The centipede, the centipede!" cried the King. "Those balls of fire are its hungry eyes longing for its prey. Now is the time to kill!"

In the dim light of the star-lit night, Hidesato saw behind the two balls of fire the long

NAGOYA

body of an enormous centipede winding round the mountains, and the light in its hundred feet glowed like so many distant lanterns moving slowly towards the shore.

Turning towards the Dragon King without the least sign of fear, Hidesato said, "Don't be afraid, but bring me my bow and arrows!"

The Dragon King quickly did as he was bid, and Hidesato fitted an arrow to his bow and took careful aim. The arrow sped forth, struck the centipede right in the middle of its head, and pierced the creature's brain. With a convulsive shudder, the serpentine body stopped moving, the fiery light of its great eyes darkened to a dull glare like a smothered fire and then went out in blackness.

The gratitude of the Dragon King knew no bounds, and a worshiping family came and bowed down before the warrior, calling him their preserver and the bravest warrior in all Japan.

The presents which he received from the grateful Dragon King were found to be of magic power. The bell, only, was ordinary, and this Hidesato presented to the temple at the end of Seta Bridge, where it hangs to this day tolling the hours.



THE HIGHWAY OUTSIDE KYŌTO

IX KYŌTO

Shiranu yo ni haerete miseru hotoke kana.

Now is the sacred time. Buddha was born into
■ world of ignorance and crime.

Two Oriental bicyclists coming from opposite directions collide at a street corner. Their machines smash against a lamp-post, and they fall at full length. Slowly they get up, carefully brush themselves and right the bicycles, and then, approaching one another, with a low bow and smiling faces, they begin to discuss the dangers of crowded thoroughfares. This is courtly Kyōto, still living in an atmosphere of Old World politeness, old tradition, and old ceremonies.

Today the street rings with the shrill treble of childish voices chanting Buddha's birthday song:

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

In the old, old time, some three thousand years ago—it was on the eighth of April, when the cherries are in full bloom—a gladsome sound loudly echoed to the far ends of all the worlds. Heaven and Earth were rejoicing at the birth of Buddha. He had entered the womb of his mother, Maya, in the form of a white elephant, having left the Heavens of contentment for the sake of suffering man. At the moment of his birth, he pointed upwards with one hand, and with the other downwards, exclaiming, "I am all!" Then he took seven steps to the right and seven steps to the left and a lotus flower sprang up at every step.

Singing this hymn with all their might, nearly ten thousand boys and girls march behind a big white elephant, that carries on its back a flowered canopy. There, within the luminous heart of a lotus, stands the statue of a naked infant, one tiny hand pointing upward and the other down. Slowly the long procession wends its way to Okazaki Park, where, to the music of the National Anthem, it is reviewed by a Royal Princess.

After a short Buddhist prayer, one boy and one girl, the honored of this great throng, solemnly walk towards the sacred elephant and mount to the canopied shrine by golden ladders. They pour over the statue of Buddha

KYŌTO

■ kind of sweet tea called *ama-cha*, insuring long life, and as the holy liquid streams about the bronze image, ten thousand flags stamped with a red swastika flutter in the breeze.

A legend runs that when the Buddha felt the time of his Nirvana approaching, he went to Kusina and there, standing upon a stone, said to his disciple Anan, "In this place I leave the impression of my feet, to remain for a last token. Although a mighty one of this country will try to destroy the impression, it can never be entirely destroyed."

And indeed it has not been destroyed to this day. Once a king who hated Buddhism caused the top of the stone to be pared off so as to remove the impression; but after the surface had been removed, the footprint swastika reappeared upon the stone.



The very next day these same balconied streets are again thronged with eager spectators. It is the day of the Tayu Dochu. Now the houses are decorated with showy lanterns, and from above the lintel of each doorpost flames a scarlet lobster. Once each year during this

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

pink glory of cherry-blossoms the Priestesses of Pleasure move in procession through the city.

From out the Houses of Myriad Flowers come Evening Mist and Filmy Cloud, to be closely followed by Face of Evening, A Thousand Springs, Fragrance of Plum Blossom, and a hundred others. They are accompanied by an army of attendants, some to push the crowd aside; others, carrying a great lantern emblazoned with her crest, precede each courtesan; still others walk a step behind the gorgeous ones, to cover them with long-handled paper umbrellas; while two girl pages, one on each side, respectfully guide the tiny footsteps as would acolytes in some priestly procession.

These courtesans are like painted idols. Their faces are as white as snow, their eyelashes black, their lips vermilion, and their toe-nails stained pink. In gorgeous, sweeping robes, and with hair haloed by radiating pins of coral and tortoise shell, they solemnly totter along on high clogs of black lacquer, a step a minute. One foot is put out a fraction of an inch and planted firmly; then the other is swung round in front of the first and across it, as a skater doing a figure eight.

Looking neither to the right nor to the left,

KYŌTO

followed by a dense but silent crowd, they stumble through the narrow streets from their home to the "guide house" and back, on a supposed errand of thanks for favors received.



Another day, another scene. The *shōji* of both shops and private houses are now thrown wide open. On public exhibition are beautiful screens, magnificent wrestling aprons, and ancient armor. The air fairly quivers with the loud clang of gongs, the fanfare of trumpets, the sharp jangle of bells, and the piercing shriek of flutes. Masked men on horseback dash wildly down the street. Groups of six men abreast, locked arm in arm, naked except for a loin cloth, run madly in pursuit. All are hurrying to the temple of the Rice-god, Inari, whose festival day it is.

This god first manifested himself in the year 700, standing in a blaze of glory in front of the temple on the high hill behind Kyōto. He took the form of an old man bearing a sheaf of rice and was named by the priests "Inari," which signifies rice man. As in old Japan wealth was always reckoned in bales of

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

rice, the God of Rice is believed to have the power of conferring wealth; and so for the common people he is the most important of all the deities, with more shrines than any other.

The road to his temple leads out of the city, up to a gray wall over whose top can be seen curving roofs from which come the faint sounds of many little bells. Swaying to and fro in the wind, they sing, even in their hiding places beneath the eaves, a song of praise in honor of Inari.

Before the entrance gate are seated two gray stone foxes with narrow, sinister eyes. The male has his mouth wide open, while the mouth of the female is closed in accordance with the Japanese proverb which says, "If the hen crows instead of the cock, there will never be peace." These are the messengers of the Rice-god, and they are worshiped by the simple country folk with the same devotion as the deity himself.

Ghostly superstition has woven strange beliefs about this stealthy animal which brings evil upon men. Every child, old and young, knows and believes the tale of the man lost in the forest who unthinkingly followed two foxes that kept crossing his path enticingly. On

KYŌTO

reaching an open space, the foxes disappeared; but to the man's surprise, he saw, where the foxes had been standing, two beautiful maidens seated on the grass playing "Go." With a smile they invited him to stop and watch their game. When at length they had finished and he had returned home, he found that his people had been gone to the "Land of Shadows" for six generations, and his children's children's children had forgotten his very name. Since that time all the peasantry in superstitious fear patter a *sutra* of the Good Law if ever they meet a fox.

The roadside is lined with seated thousands, between whom other thousands seethe back and forth, later blending together in snake-like form and serpentine in the wake of the Inari shrines, one of which even now appears between the pillars of the huge red *torii* perched on the hill-top.

Down the steep incline pours a river of bizarrely accoutered men typifying the samurai of old, each attended by a servant who drags a long metal pole which noisily clanks against the stony road, warning the common herd that their masters are approaching. White-vested

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

priests follow. They bear sacred *sakaki* trees, grown upon the Mountain of Heaven, so besprinkled with evil-dispelling paper *gohei* ■■ to resemble Christmas trees heavy with snow. With incense they purify the air for the August Presence of the bronze shrines borne on the shoulders of sweating mobs of religious zealots. Now and again these fanatics raise their voices in song; as they do so, they heave their burden in the air, to make it dance for the pleasure of the god within. Hundreds of boys tug and pull at the sleigh-belled ropes attached to the shrine, adding their discordant jangle to the moaning sounds torn and wrenched from drums and flutes. Shrine follows shrine, each carried by a yelling mob, crazed with excitement and tearing down the road at a full run, like a river in flood. Darkness alone puts an end to the mad pandemonium. The crowd disappears, swallowed up by the night.

五

That same evening the Feast of Blossoms is celebrated in one of Kyōto's great open parks in which grows an enormous cherry tree, whose long tentacle branches are so far outstretched

KYŌTO

as to need wooden crutches. Flaring torches have been set in the ground all about the tree, casting a lurid light upon the glorious burst of bloom that veils every twig in a delicate bluish-mist, while a myriad of little lanterns hung at random on the boughs gleam like fireflies among the overhanging blossoms.

Flower-viewing parties wander about in silent admiration, or else, seated on red blankets beneath the tree, drink illimitable *sake*. This habit is said to have originated in the days of Japan's first Emperor. While he was feasting with some of his courtiers in the royal park, a few petals happened to fall into his *sake* cup. They drew the attention of this monarch and he exclaimed, "Without *sake*, who can properly enjoy the sight of cherry blossoms!"—a sentiment certainly surviving to this day. Under the exhilarating influence of this wine, devised by Buddhist monks to tantalize their own asceticism, a ring of naked coolies and wrinkled old men are circling about, hand in hand, singing a strange melody in a haunting minor key, while in the deeper shadows some women are swaying rhythmically to the music. And these sounds of music and revelry will not cease until the storm gods become so jealous of the cherry's

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

beauty that they send a violent wind that tears off the veiling mist, whitening the ground with the perfumed snow of fallen petals.

六

Between the birth and the death of these flowers, beginning on the day they open and finishing the day they wither away, is danced the *Miyako-Odori*, the dance of cherries.

Each year poems woven about the life-story of some historic or legendary hero are sung in their praise. And the tale is told by the winding feet and waving arms of the most highly trained geisha in Japan, not one of whom is paid—the honor of being selected being more than sufficient payment.

Within the theater devoted to this annual performance two long dancing platforms skirt the parquet, joining the stage. Upon these so-called flower paths, at first concealed by curtains, are seated those geisha who compose the orchestra. Some have drums on their laps or on their shoulders, round drums and drums shaped like sand-glasses, which they beat with batons or smack with the open palm. Others play the *samisen* or *koto*, plucking the strings

KYŌTO

with curved finger or ivory plectrum. With faces painted and powdered a porcelain-white, their shining licorice-black hair pomaded into fantastic obedience, gorgeously dressed in black and gold, they resemble those old-time musical toy drummer-boys, who, when machinery runs down, rest rigidly immobile, their batons raised high in air.

To ears not trained, the musical prelude sounds strange and uncouth, with that barbaric melancholy that Nietzsche terms decadence. Falsetto voices in perfect rhythm take up the strain, soaring far above the natural range, as penetrating as a bird's song. The drum's rattle, the shriek of flute, the sharp nasal cries, and the wailing recitative are strangely in unison. Suddenly, from out of the blackness of nowhere, along the narrow platforms in front of the musicians there unwinds, ribbon-like, two long bands of dancers, who run towards the stage, to festoon themselves around the painted scenery.

The dance this year is called "*Chiyono Tomodzuru*," meaning flight of storks, the symbol of married happiness in Japan. It was composed in honor of the approaching wedding of H. I. H. the Prince Regent and the Princess Kuni, and the stage settings represent those

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

famous places that have some connection with the approaching ceremony. The first is a morning mist on the Island of Awaji, that island created by Japan's ancestral god and goddess, to which they descended from heaven to live happily as husband and wife. Next in the "dimness of a dark change" the scene is magically transformed into the shrine of Izumo, where the God of Love is worshiped, and before which sway the flower-like bodies of the dancing girls. This is followed in rapid, wizardly fashion by Kyōto's palace; a garden of imperial chrysanthemums; the celebrated villa to which Emperor Meiji presented a pair of storks that have increased in fabulous fashion; and finally a snow scene at the Palace of Nikkō where the honeymoon of the present Emperor was passed. The dance ends in a joyous finale when the geisha dancers huddle together for picturesque protection from a snow-storm of cherry blossoms that fly in swirling flakes over both audience and players.

In beautiful imagery, with feet, hands, and body, the dancers interpret each of the painted scenes. There is one exception—at the honeymoon palace there is no dancing; instead, an orchestra of fifty musicians plays "Tsuru-no-

KYŌTO

Sugomōri" (Confinement of the Stork), in which the trained ear is supposed to hear the whispering of the winds as fairy children beat their way from out the shadows.

七

To the Oriental and the Occidental, dislikes are likely to be mutual. This has been especially true in the realm of music. The Western ear hears the music of Japan as a song in an unknown key. On the other hand, the Eastern peoples, despite their eager willingness to learn all things new, have been slow to accept Western counterpoint. A few years ago an Italian opera troupe that appeared in Tōkyō was received with such wild hilarity that not even a second performance could be given. The women held their kimono sleeves over their mouths in the vain effort to control themselves, and the men laughed until their sides shook and the tears rolled down their cheeks.

Since then, however, numbers of world-famous pianists and violinists have visited the country. Only comparatively recently a Symphony Orchestra was formed, and it played Beethoven and Tschaikowsky to rapturous ap-

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

plause and packed houses—though but few really appreciated the music, for to most of the audience it meant nothing at all. But to attend the Symphony was the thing to do!

With all respect for Mencken's statement that "Art is for artists—let others talk about what they understand," two or three thoughts may be ventured. Is it not absurd to claim that music has only one language? If considered as folk music, would not Japanese music speak more appealingly? Of course it lacks what to the Occidental is conventional harmony, but much folk music knows little harmony. "Whenever a note is produced, it is born in the human heart, and so is in harmony with nature," says Confucius. Did not Wagner in despair write, "Why must everything in music be expected to please the ear?" May we not at least admit that the abandonment of anything so intimately bound up with tradition and culture as is their native music would be a distinct loss to Japan?



While Kyōto contrasts with Tōkyō as the past with the present, being far outshadowed in size,



THE PATH TO KIYOMIDZU, KYÔTO

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

wealth, and population by the new capital, it remains ever the Mecca and Holy City of Japan, glorying in its thousand and two hundred temple sanctuaries. Each day ■ the sun sets, the deep notes of their many bells proclaim to the world that the sun has run its course and the day is done.

Hongwanji, the largest of Kyōto's temples, has a history of its own, and ever in the mind of the people is the memory of the great fire of half ■ century ago, which ruined the great "prince temple" and nearly swept the entire city to destruction. Now another temple, far more beautiful, has arisen, phoenix-like, from the ashes. It is the great oblation of ■ religious people, built by love—the eighty million yen needed to build it were given by the poor, rin by rin. Those who could not give money, gave of themselves, and the giant center beam of the sanctuary was lifted into place by thick ropes of human hair for which thousands of devoted women sacrificed their tresses.

Today, the birthday of Shinran Shōnin, the founder of the "True Sect," a great mob crowds around the scalloped edges of a bronze lotus fountain in the garden before the temple,

KYŌTO

cleansing away all impurities in preparation for the birthday service. A further struggling mob, already purified, surges through the main gateway, filling the courtyard and the wide balconies with a kneeling multitude. The temple itself is black with the thousands of pilgrims there since early dawn. But not till the sundown bell, when day gives way to night, do the weary throng hear the long-awaited processional chant.

In single file a stream of over four thousand Buddhist priests, dressed in magnificent canonicals of stiff brocades of purple, scarlet, or green, according to their rank, pours through the red-lacquered passageway leading to the temple. As they walk, they intone in a falsetto voice a curious chant of thanksgiving, full of quivers and weird-toned thrills. The incense that curls up from a gigantic bronze brazier near the altar rises in increasingly suffocating clouds as each priest casts thereon a coarse powder of fragrant bark that in scent recalls the odor of lotus, the flower of the Pure Law. A moment of prayer, and he faces the vast throng with uplifted hand in benediction. Like an ocean wave the thousands of worshipers, as one, bow their heads to the ground.

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

With the last blessing, just as though some finger had touched an electric button communicating with every brain, that vast crowd with one accord rises and hurls itself upon the entrance of the temple. A struggling, writhing mass of men, women, and children, all battle towards the gateway, the weak to be bruised and crushed beneath a thousand feet—to die, perhaps, were it not for the Red Cross doctors and nurses on watch in expectation of just such an emergency.

九

Legendary history has woven about each and every one of Kyōto's temples some appealing belief that is part of the poetry of Japanese life. Often, of course, the appeal is only to the simple-minded peasantry, as at the temple of Kiyomizu-dera, where without the sanctum sits Binzuru, one of Buddha's ardent disciples. Though one of the chosen sixteen, he violated his vow of chastity in drawing the attention of a less susceptible saint to the beauty of a passing woman, and in disgrace was expelled from the holy company. According to the unlearned, Buddha had compassion on this black

KYŌTO

sheep and bestowed upon him the power of healing all human ills. Wherever his ugly visage is seen, you will find him surrounded by a credulous crowd who firmly believe they have only to touch his body and then rub their own in the same part to banish every ill, great or small.

Another of these superstitions finds sympathy among the educated as well as the uneducated. You can never wholly detach a man from the fears tattooed on his imagination from birth, even though his reason may reject them, and Buddhists of every rank in life make pilgrimages to the thirty-three temples of "Kwannon of the Thousand Hands," who is striving to reach all over the world.

When death took Shinran Shōnin, the most loved of Buddhist priests, his spirit was met at the entrance of Purgatory by two angels who conducted him at once to their master, the Judge of Souls, before whom all must appear for sentence. Dismissing his two attendants, the Lord of the Dead smilingly bade Shinran to sit at his side, graciously explaining that he had need of the holy priest's assistance.

"The world calls me harsh in my judgments,

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

forgetting that everyone makes his own prison. I would only hurt the good did I spare the bad, but the wicked flourish so mightily that hell can no longer hold them, and my heart is sick within me. Kwannon, the loving, died to save the world from sin and has divided her body into thirty-three parts to express that love. To each of those consecrated fragments a temple must be dedicated, thirty-three in all, and I decree that a pilgrimage to those shrines shall free a man from sin and give him entrance into Paradise. You, O holy priest, have been chosen as my ambassador. Here are your credentials. Among the papers you will find a map showing where the thirty-three temples are to be built. Go back to earth and preach my message."

The great-hearted priest was only too glad to do as he was bid, and after three days and three nights his spirit entered into the old body and he was alive again. Without delay he started on his Master's work, and when the thirty-three temples were dedicated, he, with a great company of disciples, made the first pilgrimage. Since then countless millions have followed in the path blazed by him.

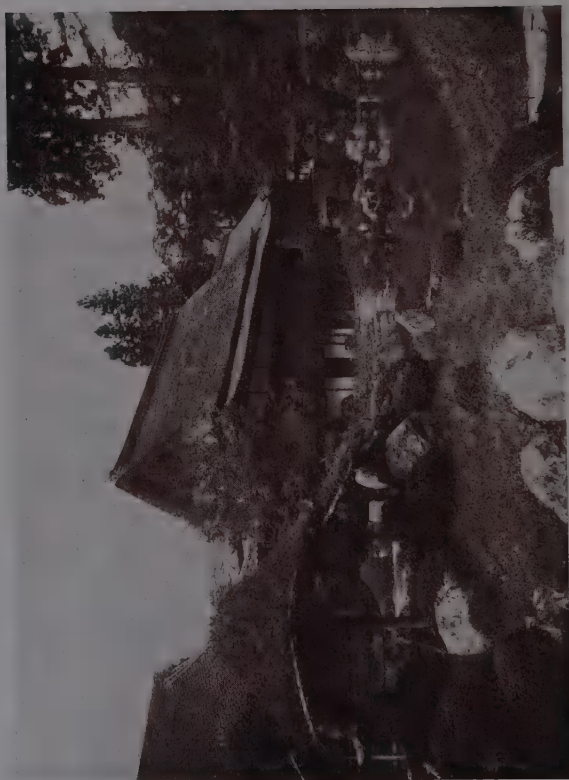
KYŌTO



Surrounding many of these temples are some of those exquisite gardens which in this æsthetic country are looked upon as poems or pictures of inspiration.

Art is a common inheritance in Japan. Those who cannot express it understand it, and behind the most unassuming house-door, walled away from the rest of the world, is found a dainty miracle of transplanted nature. Dwarf mountains and trees in miniature exactly duplicate some broad expanse of natural scenery, the very smallness of the shrubs lending themselves to the idea of vastness. In the great gardens of the rich will be discovered a charm unequaled in any other land, a charm absolutely unique in its religious conception, for gardening, as all the other arts in Japan, has been strongly influenced by Buddhism.

“Verily, verily, even rocks and stones shall enter Nirvana,” said Buddha; so to the rocks and stones that are such important features in all Japanese gardens are generally given god-names. Upon their proper placing depends much of the beauty and perfection of the



A TEMPLE GARDEN

KYŌTO

garden. One stone wrongly placed would upset all the quiet and repose of the picture. So essential are the shape, the color, and proportion to suggest exactly the mountain or hill of the natural scene, that thousands of dollars are paid when just the right stone is discovered.

Each of these stepping-stones, known as "Scattered Islands," lead to the places of beauty: perhaps to some broad lake fringed with azaleas, where lotus leaves sway back and forth as they catch the spray from a fountain cascade. The leaves hold the spray for a moment and then gracefully bend down to empty their sparkling load. Again, the stones may lead to a long slope of green, shadowed by flowering shrubs that hide a brook. Thrown across the wandering stream will be arched bridges, suggesting the full moon, the reflection in the mirror water completing the circle. Or, swelling from out an undulating plain of moss-covered earth will be disclosed a diminutive Fuji, snow-capped—its summit covered with white flowers. Or possibly one may discover only a marshy swamp, a mass of iris, with great gorgeous blossoms of every shade of lilac and purple, where storks and cranes are allowed to wander in stately grace. But whatever it is, all is in

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

artistic harmony, according to an unbending law that has provided for almost every blade of grass and every drop of water.



Arashi-yama is Kyōto's most famous nature garden. There the brush of spring paints delicate cherry tints amid the deeper tones of evergreens that clothe this romantic gorge. Autumn, challenging spring, weaves a red and gold brocade and spreads it over the hills until the whole countryside is alight with fiery splendor. Then the thousands of rustic tea-sheds that line the river banks are filled with maple-viewing parties, who sit and gaze at the glorious scene, wondering which is more beautiful, the trees dressed in red or the water below, red too, so thickly is it covered with fallen leaves. As they look, a boat filled with merry-makers cuts a track through the crimson carpet. It has just completed its thirteen-mile journey through the Hōzu Rapids.

The boat is high-sided, with a sharply raised prow; the bottom, fashioned of long, thin, flexible planks, gives to the impact of the river boulders without breaking. At Kameoka,



TEA SHEDS ALONG THE RIVER BANK, KYŌTO

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

the place of embarkation, the river is merely a smooth-running stream of crystal water, flowing over a bed of pebbles, every one of which can be seen glistening on the bottom. But once swung around the wide curve, a ripple of white is seen to cross the ribbon of blue, and the boat plunges into the first rapid.

The crew of four stalwart fellows, big of arm and shoulder, thick of leg and heavily muscled, spring into action, each having a definite duty to perform—and failing to do it means a wrecked boat. But for the skillful steersman, with his long bamboo, the heavy craft would be hurled against the wicked rocks that everywhere stick their heads above the waves. He craftily wards them off, swinging around the ungainly hulk as though it were a featherweight.

Every twist and turn, every angry grasping of the current, is met by one or the other of the men with a dextrous placing of his pole or a well-timed sweep of oar. Narrower and narrower becomes the stream; steeper and higher the towering banks. The roar of the water deafens the ears as it forces its way into the lion's mouth, two huge jagged rocks that try to bar its passage. Waves dash over the boat,

KYŌTO

it shivers from stem to stern like a living thing, and then, shaking itself free, takes a last plunge, to relax into the quiet restfulness of Arashi-yama.



At the time of Omar, when Kyōto's winter garments have been flung into the fire of spring, the river that cuts the city in two becomes domesticated and offers the greater part of its dry bed to pleasure. From either bank, with their long rows of overhanging houses built on piles, little bamboo bridges lead out to umbrellaed tables. Here Kyōtians feast as they listen to the music of geishas seated on the balconies above, to whom, with fluttering fans, they wave improper proposals.

But only turn your back, and you may see smoke curling up from a hundred altar censers, near each of which sits a guardian priest, from dawn till dusk and from dusk till dawn, cross-legged, like a statue of Buddha, absolutely motionless.

Such are the contrasts of Kyōto.

X

THE TEMPLE OF ISE

Misogi shite asaki nagare ya mizu hikaru.

The sunlit waters gleam and worshipers with
solemn rites wash in the shallow stream.



“DON’T fail to see the Temple of Ise!”

“What is there to see?”

“Nothing—and you are not even allowed to see that. The buildings are surrounded by high palisades and, except for the priests and the Emperor, no one may enter the sanctuary in which is enshrined the holy mirror.”

“I don’t understand! Why go, then?”

“To find the patriotic soul of Japan.”



Many Japanese pilgrimages are due less to religious sentiment than to a national passion for sight-seeing, and our pilgrims to Ise will certainly linger at Uji until the first moonless night stages the inexplicable *Hotaru-Kassen*, the battle of fireflies.

THE TEMPLE OF ISE

Perhaps a mile or so from the city, the river Seta wanders through thick groves of bamboo, whose slender shafts bow with every breeze, touching their feathery tips one to the other, shadowing the silver thread even by day. And when the sun goes down and the mantle of night covers the banks on either side, all light dies from the gleaming water and Heaven as well as Earth becomes suddenly black. Then uncounted millions of sparkling insects whirl and circle against the velvety background. Massed together in seeming battle formation, they dart from opposite shores to meet in one long luminous cloud, only to break apart and shower the water below with glittering bodies, that, drifting with the current, turn the river into an earthly Milky Way.

To the superstitious, these fireflies are the ghosts of two old-time warrior clans who in life were always waging war, and now each year, as inspiration to new Japan, again engage in battle.

Others fancifully claim them to be the descendants of the firefly Prince, who, alone, carrying the divine flame in his body, won the heart of the beautiful fairy Hotaru. So mightily beset was this princess by undesirable suitors

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

that she was forced to herald publicly her unwillingness to marry any except that one of all her lovers who could bring her a beacon light of fire. All the princes of the kingdom gaily set forth on the quest. Some tried to snatch the *ignis fatuus* from flickering candles, only to have their wings singed in the flame; others were drowned in the oil of red-clay basins, where floated glowing wicks of hemp; while still others were burned alive at the top of smoldering incense sticks. But the greater number sought the big lamps that brilliantly illumined the temple grounds of Kōshō-ji, and in their wild seeking dashed against the stone sides of the lanterns, so that the ground all about was covered with dead and mutilated bodies.

The morning after we witnessed the firefly battle, our pilgrims, while at their early devotions before the shrine of Kōshō-ji, overheard the temple sweepers grumbling as they brushed away the thousands of dead insects, "My, but the Fairy Princess had many lovers last night!"

In ancient times firefly hunting was an aristocratic amusement, but now it has become a lucrative occupation for those who are not above coining money from the ghosts of somebody

THE TEMPLE OF ISE

else's ancestors. Armed with a bag of fine net and a long pole, an expert will catch thousands on one expedition. On dark, sultry nights a hunter will station himself within a grove of weeping willows, aglow with fireflies. He gives the trees a sharp blow with his pole, dislodging the insects. More brilliant than ever from fear or pain, they drop helplessly to the ground. Later, confined within tiny cages that are half full of moistened grass, they sparkle for a few days, to the joy of rich and poor alike. Often they are given their freedom at some evening entertainment, when the diners eat by firefly light and later are allowed to recapture a few of the "torches" as dinner favors, for which prisons of golden wire are presented.

Fireflies play so conspicuous a part in Japanese life that among the governmental announcements of April may be read the Imperial acknowledgment of the season's first lightning bugs, caught at Uji, and sent by the High Abbot of Kōshōji to the Emperor.



Now our pilgrims wend their way to beautiful Nara, the theater of Japan's early history,

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

where the flower of nationality is unfolded. All paths lead to the Park of the Gods, that lies within the heart of the city—a thousand and more acres of magnificent woodland and gentle hill-slope, crossed and recrossed by splendid avenues, over which stoop century-old cryptomerias. It is one vast blanket of green, into whose leafy pattern every shade has been woven. Leafless trees have hidden themselves, and even blossoming trees have withdrawn behind some screening neighbor to rear in solitude the flower children which later will be their glory.

Slumbering within this casket of verdure are many old temple buildings, dulled by passing time to a rich deep coloring. The approaching roads are lined with lanterns of bronze and stone—beautiful memorials to the dead, each bearing a spirit name and faithfully kept lighted during the darkness of a hundred nights. Their flames, spectral as will-of-the-wisps, are thought to be the ancestral ghosts, said to haunt this Park of the Gods.

As usual, the temples are full of worshipers. Within their golden immensity gleams the scarlet of priestly robes. On the matting before the great Buddha kneel those in sorrow,

THE TEMPLE OF ISE

giving utterance to the incoherent prayers so often on the lips of suffering humanity. Those who have grievously sinned and have come to be absolved plod round and round the narrow corridor encircling the temple, in a stupor of fanaticism. They make the circuit one hundred times. Each carries a bundle of one hundred sticks, which, as they pass the statue of Buddha, they throw away, one by one, to mark their progress, repeating in a loud voice the while, "*Namu Myōhō Renge Kyō!*" (Hail to the salvation-bringing revelations of the law.) These murmured prayers never cease, except when the worshipers stop for a moment to weave into the latticed corridor windows paper records of their vows.

At last are heard a soft clapping of hands, the tinkle of thrown coins, and the pattering of dry rice, the offering of those unable to give money.

Then the crowd drifts out into the open court, where, quietly browsing, are the sacred deer—all lineal descendants of the stag upon which rode the god Takemikazuchi, when first he appeared to Nara. Up to the time of the restoration, whosoever killed one of these animals was punished by death. There is a story of the

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

daring leader of a group of boys who, caught abusing these deer, was sealed in a box and left to die, as a frightful example. And it is said that a woman who threw a broken knife out of her window and accidentally killed a deer was executed.

Today the penalty is only a severe fine, but the deer are still considered as belonging to the gods and, protected by reason of this long immunity, they tag the temple worshipers in anticipation of expected sweets. If too long neglected, a soft nose will surely find its way into negligent hands, or a none too tender thump on the back with lowered head will force attention.



From afar comes the muffled roar of the monster bell of Daibutsu,¹ then the echo and then endless echoes of that echo. It sounds the hour of sunset, which, as the sky turns to glowing copper, paints the temples a flaming vermilion. The Sun, "augustly sorrowing," bows her head still lower and all the splendid beauty is blotted out. A moment only, for soon the

¹ All oriental bells are rung, not by a metal clapper, but by a swinging wooden beam that deadens the sound.



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IN NARA PARK

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

lantern lights twinkle through the trees, like stars fallen from the sky, and the moon braids the clouds with silver, shedding a soft radiance over the gently sloping roofs of the old, old nunnery of Hokkei-ji.

True it may be that Buddha did not preach asceticism, for he was convinced that fasting and penance were stumbling blocks to peace of mind, but he did demand complete mastery over all human desires. In the light of this teaching it is difficult to accept as his disciples the buxom, too ample-bosomed nuns of Hokkei-ji. They grossly showed their love for the pleasures of the table—and some of their cherished relics more than hint at a violation of another of the ten vows. The most sacred of these possessions is a pathetic kneeling figure of a shaven-headed nun, shaped from paper pulp. No sainted image this, but the molded likeness of a celebrated court beauty, with high-bred face and slender young grace, madly loved by a royal prince, whom she loved madly in return.

The Emperor, father of the Prince, not only refused his consent to their marriage, but forced his son to become a Buddhist priest, sending him to a far-away monastery. The maiden was taken to Nara and placed in the convent of

THE TEMPLE OF ISE

Hokkei-ji. The lovers sought consolation in daily letters, and in all the years that followed, not a day passed without its passionate missive to each. "Love lives through all eternity," once wrote this nun. "My love will not die when I pass into the Land of Shadows, it will live alway. I have drunk of Love's cup, and it will give me immortality so that I may live with the gods to watch over thee and to care for thee." And when Sister Desolation—for so she was now called—felt herself about to die, she gathered from their hiding places all her treasured letters and, pounding them into pulp, molded a lasting likeness of herself as a symbol of undying fidelity. There is a look of infinite sadness on the face of this piteous figure, kneeling at the foot of the altar enshrining the all-wise Amida, as though in the Land of Shadows she had been made to see the truth: "Nothing is eternal but that which is done for Buddha. That which is done for self dies."

五

Down a sun-lit road, between fields of rice rippling under the sleepy breeze, slowly trudge our pilgrims. Suddenly they stop short, all

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

fatigue forgotten. *Hitome Sem-bon*, "A Thousand Trees at One Glance," lies below them. Hillside and valley are adorned in pink and white, filmy as the incense from some hidden burner. The entire gorge is massed with flowering plums, that overhang the River-of-Fragrant-Blossoms, into which fall clouds of petals to be swept downstream like drifts of foam. Along the banks are gathered other pilgrims, as well as priests, painters, poets, and professors. All have come to nature as the only teacher to be trusted.

Solemn-faced maidens fill their tiny hands with snow-white blossoms and playfully toss them into the air, while their elders sit side by side on gold-colored mats, lost in thought, "their souls in action and verses distilling in their brain." Some hold writing-brush in hand, and the fluttering slips of paper tied with silken thread to the flowering branches betray their use. One falls to the ground, untied by the wind, and may be read:

Ume no hana ke nagara utsutsu fude mo gana.

So sweet the plum tree smells!
Would that the brush that paints the flower
Could paint the scent as well.

THE TEMPLE OF ISE

All Japan writes poetry. At the close of each year the Imperial Household announces a subject for a New Year's poem, inviting the whole nation to compete. All over the Empire ink stones and brushes are got out and thousands of *tanka* are composed—last year there were over twenty thousand—and sent to the Governmental Bureau, to be examined. One by one they are carefully considered, and the best is selected for reading to the Imperial family—all of whom, incidentally, take personal part in this poetical contest.

So sketchy in form is the *tanka*—a five-line poem—that it is comparable to a Japanese drawing which, in a few strokes, encloses the subtlest thoughts. And like the drawings, impressionistic, the *tanka* is intended only to suggest haunting memories.

六

Off the shore of Akogi, near the city of Tsu, the deep, mellow voice of the Pacific sounds more than usually full of mystery and awe, as if lamenting the dead it hides within its depths. At least, so think the Akogi fishermen, whose daily catch must be offered to the gods of Ise

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

Shrine; not a single fish, according to law, may be sold as mortal's food.

But once upon a time a fisher lad of seventeen broke this law. His parents were dying of tuberculosis, and his scanty earnings could buy neither a physician nor medicine. On being told that the blood of carp was a cure, he ventured under cover of night to try for this coveted fish. Twice, three times he cast, and then his sacrilegious deed was discovered. At once he was sentenced to death, carried out to the deep waters, and drowned. For years thereafter, on each anniversary of his death, the ghost of this lad appeared over the sea and there was heard the sound of someone casting a net. Nor did the sound cease until the fishermen, by way of propitiation, erected the tomb which to-day stands solitary and alone, surrounded by a grove of trees, on this long stretch of beach.

Paradoxical as always, while the Japanese allow no fish to be caught, the culture of pearl oysters is a thriving business on these shores. Thrashing about in the water, apparently as much at home as the inhabitants of the sea themselves, may be seen at any time of day dozens of sturdy women, with hair yellowed from the action of salt. You hear a sharp hiss-

THE TEMPLE OF ISE

ing intake of breath, a gurgle, and they disappear for a minute, two minutes, and even three. When they again come to the surface, their arms are full of pearl oysters, which they dump into the floating tub attached to their waists by a long, flexible cord. The spawn of the oysters through natural processes has been moored to flat stones, laid along the shore for this purpose. When the shells begin to form, they are transferred to deeper waters, and a tiny foreign substance is introduced within the shell. Forced into the living organism as far as possible without harm, it acts as an irritant, causing the bivalve to secrete about the offending particle protecting pearly layers. Seven years later the oysters, containing man-made pearls with all the satiny finish of nature's best work, are ripe for the divers.

And these ugly diving women, earning far more than any of the men hereabouts, are the choicest matrimonial prizes of the peninsula, "having all the beauty that wealth e'er gave."

七

Our Pilgrims' Progress is very unlike that described by Bunyan. On arriving at the Holy

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

City of Ise, they at once hasten to the bright lights of the long, straggling, main street. All the inns are gaily bannered with a strange collection of ideographed towels, the gifts of former lodgers and displayed by the hotel keepers as advertisements. Wedged in between these inns are tea-houses and houses of prostitution, from which comes a suffocating reek of kitchen, cosmetic, and sex. Within some of the vestibules kneel priestesses of Eros, who, with faces whitened to a mask of clay and dressed in brilliant colors, look like painted porcelain figures. Speaking generally, there is little conscious idea of sin in the Japanese mentality. To them ■ shop where so-called love is bought is no different from one that sells food or clothing, and the one is as openly and frankly entered as the other.

In the most sumptuous of these houses is danced the *Ise Ondo*, whose only excuse is its antiquity.

Like all houses of the Holy City this one is gable end to the street, so that the perspective, on entering, is of great depth. The side walls blaze with glaring red wheels, symbols of the Goddess Sun, while the brown planks of the flooring, brilliantly waxed, double, as in dark

THE TEMPLE OF ISE

waters, the lights of the paper lanterns that festoon the corridor. At the far end, in a great room around which runs a low red-lacquered railing fronted by flaring candles, await six musicians with long-necked *samisens* by their sides. With the first strains of music, the floor from behind the railing opens upward, bringing out of space a gaily decorated platform, on which are posed living statues. The *samisens* strike a livelier note and these images come to life. Crimsoned lips part in soliciting smile, kohl-darkened eyes flash an invitation, and bodies begin to move in the slow, revealing dance of Ise. The wanton exhibition lasts only long enough to allow the play of imagination. Then the platform with its glittering burden sinks out of sight and with it the sophisticated spectators, who hurry away to claim their choice.



Early morning finds saints and sinners alike within the sacred confines of "Divine Park," now at the zenith of its glory. Nature has magically covered the fields with a spring mantle of azaleas, of such vivid coloring that the earth seems strewn with rainbow showers.

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

Descending to the banks of the Isuzu-gawa, which sings a loud song of lament as on its way to the ocean it strikes the sharp boulders of the river-bed, one and all purify themselves in the crystal waters, chanting as they do so the sacred words, "O river, receive the sins which I shall confess today before the goddess Sun, and carry them away to be lost in the sea."

A gigantic torii¹ points the way to a dense grove of straight-limbed cryptomerias, within which can be dimly seen a group of temple buildings.

Its holy of holies hides behind a succession of palisade fences, built of unpainted wood. A gateway, torii-shaped, gives free entrance through the first palisade into an empty court. The gate exit from this is closed by a hanging white curtain of silk. As it sways with the breeze, another court, equally empty, is glimpsed, but none save the privileged are allowed to pass within.

Not long since, a Japanese of high rank com-

¹ The almost forgotten meaning of torii—two huge upright posts, topped by an overhanging crossbeam—is "perch." Upon them, originally were supposed to roost the sacred white cocks, venerated because when, once upon a time, the Goddess Sun, the ancestress of the Japanese Imperial House, sulked and all the world was dark, it was they who announced her reappearance. Today hundreds of white roosters wander at liberty in Ise.

THE TEMPLE OF ISE

mitted the sacrilege of lifting this silken curtain with the end of his cane, better to peer within, and he was killed on the spot. His murderer, to be sure, was executed, but the murderer's memory is held in reverence throughout Japan, while that of the murdered man is execrated.

Our simple, unprivileged pilgrims can go no farther, and so must content themselves with kneeling and casting under the swaying curtain their offerings of money and paper-inscribed prayers. They have seen absolutely nothing; have heard absolutely nothing; but they have been permitted to come within the sacred precincts dedicated to the God Creator of their country, and their usually emotionless faces are transfigured with pride.

Ise is as sacred to the Japanese as the holy places of Jerusalem are to Christians or as Mecca is to the Mohammedans; and it is something more. It is the well at which national vanity is refreshed, the home of the vainest of all religions—a religion that has appropriated to itself the sun, from whom is divinely descended that unique family which has reigned since prehistoric ages. No other nation ever before conceived the vainglorious idea of deify-

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

ing their country and with it their people. Remember this, and the deep-seated pride of the Japanese is more easily explainable.

Seven times each year an Imperial Envoy goes to Ise, to make a report to the ancestral deity. At all times of national peril a solemn petition for help is made to the gods. And the same petition that was used in the fourth century, when the Mongol invasion threatened the country, was read before the shrine of Ise sixteen centuries later, on the declaration of war with Germany.

While certain officials, according to rank, are permitted to approach nearer the sanctuary than may our pilgrims, only the priests and the Emperor ever penetrate to the inner depths, where, in a little wooden temple, there has rested since the beginning of time the mirror of the Goddess Sun.

In the *Kojiki*, the Shintō Bible, one reads that the Sun Goddess had a violent quarrel with her brother, Susano-o, and retiring into the Heavenly Rock Dwelling, she closed the door and made it fast. Whereupon, the whole Plain of High Heaven was darkened and eternal night prevailed.

Greatly distressed, the other deities held

THE TEMPLE OF ISE

council on how to appease the anger of this great goddess. They decided to forge from iron dug out of the mines of Heaven a large mirror, shaped like the Sun, which they set up in front of the cavern entrance. When all was in readiness and the myriad other deities had gathered together, the Goddess Uzume was requested to dance. She consented gladly, and danced with such abandon and unrestraint that all her clothing fell off. At this, the assembled gods laughed so loudly that the Heavens shook, and the assembled cocks began to crow in concert.

Amaterasu, the Sun Goddess, heard the strange noises and, slightly opening the door of Heaven, she peered out. In the mirror she saw herself reflected, and in curiosity stepped forward. The Strong One hastily stretched a rope behind her and drew her gently forward. Then all was peace and prosperity again in the Heavens and on the Earth.

This was the mirror which Amaterasu gave to her grandson, Ninigi-no-Mikoto, when she bade him descend to Earth and found a kingdom. "Look upon it ■■ my spirit," she said. "Set it up in a temple, and worship it as you would worship my living presence. Do this,

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

and the land shall be ruled hereditarily by my descendants, and the prosperity of the Imperial House shall be everlasting like the heavens." And Ninigi did as he was bid, going to Kyūshū, where he, and later his son and grandson, reigned.

Shintōism, the state religion, offers an almost unique example of the survival of a primitive faith among a most progressive people—a faith that has kept alive the fires of patriotism and loyalty in teaching the unbroken continuity of the Japanese people.

XI

FROM ŌSAKA TO KŌBE

Kono tsuka no hoki no oran kare obana.

At Kōbō's grave today I plucked a bunch of
withered grass and swept the dust away.

NEARLY every Japanese, although a Shintōist—that is to say, a worshiper of Japan—is at the same time a Buddhist, and the gods of both faiths live on amicable terms in the same house, side by side. It is not extraordinary, therefore, that our pilgrims directly after visiting Shintō's holiest city start on a journey to Buddhist Kōya-san.

They find the mountain of Kōya-san beaded with other travel-worn pilgrims, all chanting as they climb: "*Rokkon-shōjo-ōyama!*" (May our six senses grow pure as we climb the heights.) It is a most stirring refrain, very reminiscent of the chorus in "Tannhäuser."

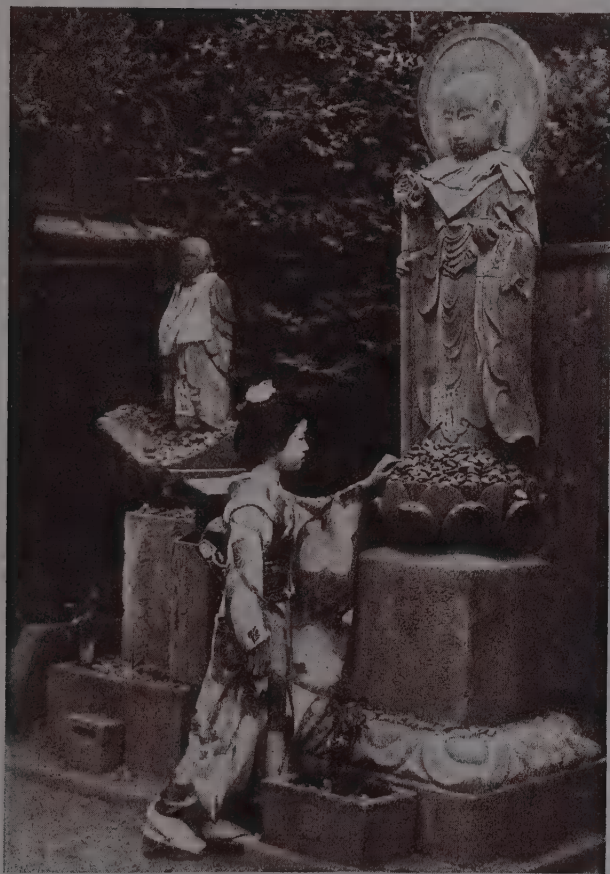
Over the "Road of Many Turnings," up and up, through green shadowy places, they climb, at length to find themselves out under the open sky, able to gaze down at the mist-shrouded

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

lowlands, or up toward the heights from which echoes the faint ringing of unseen bells that mingle harmoniously with the hushed music of the mountain streams. Once across the Bridge of Paradise, they prostrate themselves one by one before the bronze image of Jizō, the guardian god of dead children. He it was who said, "I will hide thee in my sleeve and keep thee from all evil and play shadowy play with thee."

Heaps of pebbles lie about Jizō's feet, and even upon his shoulders. Each night little ghosts are said to come here from Sai-no-Kawara, which is the place where all children must go after death. There, for penance, they build mounds of stones, which wicked devils pull down in order to frighten and torment the child souls, who then run to Jizō to hide in his great sleeves and be comforted. Each stone laid upon the knees or at the feet of Jizō with a heartfelt prayer will help some child in performing his long penance, and each pilgrim takes from his wallet a tiny pebble and reverently places it before the altar.

Now it came to pass that when Kōbō Daishi, the founder of Buddhism in Japan, had reached old age, he searched the country over for a holy retreat in which to spend his declining years,



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THE BUDDHIST GOD "JIZŌ," FRIEND
OF LITTLE CHILDREN

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

and happening upon Mount Kōya, he built there a great monastery, the greatest in all Japan, to which flocked thousands of devotees. And when the time came that he felt death approaching, he bade farewell to his disciples and went out alone into a cathedral grove of cryptomerias and laid himself down quietly to sleep, a sleep that proved eternal.

Over the dead body his sorrowing disciples raised a mortuary shrine, and in front they built the Hall of Ten Thousand Lamps, whose sacred lights are kept burning day and night.

Nine thousand and nine hundred and ninety-nine of these lamps were donated by a very rich man; the ten-thousandth was given by a woman, so poor, that to buy it she was obliged to sell her hair. But in the eyes of Buddha her offering proved the more acceptable, for once when there came a great gust of wind, the rich man's lamps were all blown out, while the poor woman's single lamp shone with increased brilliancy, and since that day it has never been extinguished.

Around about has risen a city of tombs, a cemetery crowded with shafts of memory, many of them splintered and covered with sil-

FROM ŌSAKA TO KŌBE

very moss, which glistens in spots like so many teardrops. In this Valhalla lie all the great of Japan, from prince to geisha. To be buried in the same ground with the sainted Kōbō is to obtain re-birth in the Pure Land of Perfect Bliss, and the families financially unable to buy the coveted honor for their dead, send, after cremation, the Adam's apple, to be thrown in Kōya-san's Hall of Bones. With it goes a funeral tablet to be prayed over as often as means permit, and every morning at the hour before dawn may be heard a funeral bell sobbing over the hills, calling to the Tablet Shrine.

It is a low-ceilinged room, lighted by numberless candles that burn before memorial tablets of gold and silver. The air is sweet with the incense that rises from many braziers. Before the altar of Buddha sits an old abbot, his eyes unchangeably fixed, only the mumbling lips giving life to his mask-like face. To right and left, like wings, two rows of young priests spread out. They are singing a melancholic rhythmic chant, that throbs like a living thing through the heavy fragrance.

The lean, trembling fingers of the old abbot

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

stretch out and strike a sweet-toned bell. It is the signal for the mourners, kneeling at the dark end of the room, to come forward. One by one they approach, always on their knees. When they reach the altar, they scatter incense in the lotus burner in front of the tablet, pouring out an impassioned prayer to this spirit of the dead. After a time the murmur of the intoned dirge ceases, and the world of mysticism is left for the world of reality.



Stern reality is Ōsaka's greeting on May the first. Though "May Day" in Japan is but three years old, Socialism has already cast its shadow over this land of obedience to authority, and even "rouged anarchy" lurks not far away. Those in power are said to fear this new untried force with a terror bordering on panic, and to-day groups of armed men are mobilized around every strategic corner, while an army of policemen line the streets. But this exhibition of force seems to act as a spur to do the very things forbidden to do, and in defiance of police orders ten thousand paraders are singing the song of Labor:

FROM ŌSAKA TO KŌBE

Oh, May Day, May Day!
Thee we honor yearly,
Telling all men clearly
Workers shall be free men,
Free from despot masters,
Free from fear of famine.

Oh, May Day, May Day!
Thee we honor yearly,
Telling all men clearly
Now we stand united,
Mighty to deliver
Men from foul oppression.

Though red flags have been proscribed, along the route of march, on clotheslines, as if out to dry, hang hundreds of those brilliant red under-kimonos possessed by every woman in the country.

Revolutionary speeches are prohibited, but the air is dark with fluttering red leaflets, entitled, *How to Snatch Bread*. "We are on the verge of starvation. Which shall it be, suicide or revolution? Why should we die? We have been robbed. Let us take back what is ours."

A young, ungainly giant is coming out of a long sleep.

While the people of Japan still feel the effects of centuries of feudal rule, they are dimly

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

aware of strange emotions, as yet largely repressed and inarticulate; but the long-smoldering labor volcano is now beginning to shoot forth showers of sparks that light up the sky with warning flame. Tightly penned up for centuries, this nation of sixty millions is like one half-awakened from a dream, tossing on an uneasy bed, but hearing through the mist of sleep the calling voice of class consciousness, that has given birth to this blind groping towards freer life. War, with its insistent cry for fighting material, momentarily lent labor the whip hand; strikes became an epidemic, and labor had its baptism of fire. A hostile government responded with a policy of ruthless repression, executing the leaders and sentencing many others to life imprisonment. But forcing a movement underground never kills it; rather, it serves to feed and strengthen its roots, and in this case the result is a better, clearer understanding of labor's latent power.

Yet it is interesting to note that even at the very peak of this socialistic wave there is not a trace of disloyalty. The ruling house stands firm and unshaken. No true Japanese would ever think of denying his own father, and the Emperor is the common father of all.



In this Japanese Pittsburgh, hundreds and hundreds of high chimneys blacken the countryside, belching forth such clouds of smoke that the sky is obscured and the sun looks as though it were peering through darkened glasses. The huge factory buildings swarm with women and children workers. The human sacrifice made to the God of Industry makes Ōsaka a city of down-trodden womanhood, that is spreading broadcast broken bodies and souls. Despite this, perhaps because of it, Ōsaka has the only temple in the world that is dedicated solely to women and children.

Every bit of wall space in Tennō-ji is concealed by shelves piled high with baby dresses, many time-whitened to spectral gray, looking as if about to curl up like smoke and disappear. From the ceiling hangs a bewildering medley of stiff-jointed dolls with outstretched arms, drums, toy ships, picture books, and rattles, whose spirits have followed the baby souls to Paradise, that the little hands which have clasped them night and day may not be quite comfortless in their new nursery. Near the entrance, tumbling down from the twilight above,



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THE TEMPLE BELL OF TENNŌ-JI

FROM ŌSAKA TO KŌBE

is a heavy rope made from the yellow, blue, and scarlet bibs of dead children. It rings the *Indō no kane*, the guiding bell which pilots the feet of little children through the dark. Each time it sounds, some little spirit is believed to hear and find its way back to these toys.

At almost any hour of any day, kneeling before the altar of this shrine, may be seen some sorrowing mother from whose face all hope has vanished. She is holding a tiny kimono of bright-colored material, which, after a prayer, she gives to the officiating priest, together with a small copper coin. He takes the garment, folds it carefully, and places it on a shelf, handing to the woman, in exchange for the money, a slip of paper attached to a thin wand of bamboo. Hugging this to her breast, she gropes her way to the room of the Sacred Spring, where, from the mouth of a stone tortoise dingy with age, pours the hallowed stream that flows from earth to heaven. There another priest for another piece of money inscribes the paper with the new name bestowed on every believer after death, holding it within the running stream until it is carried away to Shōtoku-taishi, who will now use his powers of intercession with Amida. Comforted by the thought, the poor woman

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

passes out of the temple into the courtyard, where she pauses for a moment to search the sky. Suddenly she catches sight of a small snow-white cloud that is hovering over the enclosure. To this she bows many times, touching the ground with her forehead. It is the *Shita dama*, the spirit of her child, come to assure her that all is well.



Hidden away in this commercial heart of Japan is still one other temple of unfamiliar sentiment, and but few of Ōsaka's strugglers after wealth ever pass the doors of Daichō-ji without a prayer for the souls of the ill-fated Gompachi and Komurasaki.¹

"About two hundred and thirty years ago there lived in the service of a *daimyō*, of the province of Inaba, a young man called Gompachi, who, when he was but sixteen years of age, had already won a name for his personal beauty. Now it happened one day that a dog belonging to him fought with another dog belonging to a fellow-clansman, and the two masters, both passionate youths, disputing to

¹ The following story is quoted from *Tales of Old Japan*, by Lord Redesdale. Copyright by The Macmillan Company.

FROM ŌSAKA TO KŌBE

whose dog had the best of the fight, quarreled and came to blows. Gompachi slew his adversary and in consequence was obliged to flee from his country and make his way to Yedo (Tōkyō).

“One night, weary and footsore, he entered what appeared to him to be a roadside inn, ordered some refreshment, and went to bed, little thinking of the danger that menaced him. As luck would have it, this inn turned out to be the trysting-place of a gang of robbers into whose clutches he had all unwittingly fallen. To be sure, Gompachi had only a scantily furnished purse, but his sword and dirk were worth some three hundred ounces of silver, and upon these the robbers—of whom there were ten—had cast envious eyes and, to gain them, had determined to kill the owner. But all unsuspecting, Gompachi slept on.

“In the dead of night he was startled from his deep slumbers by someone stealthily opening the sliding-door which led into his room. Rousing himself with an effort, he beheld a beautiful young girl who, making signs to him not to stir, came up to his bedside and said to him in a whisper: ‘Sir, the master of this house is the chief of a gang of robbers who have been plotting to murder you this night for the sake

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

of your clothes and your sword. As for me, I am the daughter of a merchant in Mikana. Last year these robbers came to our house and carried off my father's treasure and myself. I pray you, sir, take me with you, and let us fly from this dreadful place.'

"She wept as she spoke, and Gompachi was at first too startled to answer; but being a youth of high courage, he soon recovered his presence of mind, and determined to kill the robbers and deliver the girl out of their hands. So he replied: 'Since you say so, I will kill these thieves and rescue you this very night. Only do you, when I begin to fight, run outside the house, that you may be out of harm's way, and remain in hiding until I join you.'

"Upon this understanding, the maiden left him and went her way. But he lay awake, holding his very breath and watching, and when the thieves crept into the room where they supposed him to be fast asleep, he cut down the first man that entered, and, fighting with desperation, drove away the rest. After thus ridding himself of the robbers, he went outside the house and called to the girl, who came running to his side, and joyfully traveled on with him to Mikana, where her father dwelt. When

FROM ŌSAKA TO KŌBE

they reached Mikana, he took the maiden to her home; and when the old mother and father saw their daughter whom they had lost, restored to them, they were beside themselves with joy. In their gratitude, they pressed Gompachi to remain with them forever, but he was eager to go to Yedo, and soon started on his journey.

“At the end of some months, Gompachi, having nothing to do, fell into bad ways and began to live a dissolute life. He frequented the Yoshiwara, the quarter of the town set aside for tea-houses and other haunts of wild young men, where his handsome face and figure attracted attention and soon made him a great favorite with all the beauties of the neighborhood.

“About this time men began to speak loud in praise of the charms of Komurasaki, a young girl who had recently come to the Yoshiwara, and who in beauty and accomplishments outshone all her rivals. Gompachi, like the rest of the world, heard so much of her fame that he determined to go to the sign of ‘The Three Sea-Coasts,’ where she dwelt, and judge for himself. Accordingly, he set out one day and, having arrived at ‘The Three Sea-Coasts,’ asked to see Komurasaki. On being shown into the

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

room where she was sitting, he advanced towards her. When their eyes met, they both started back with a cry of astonishment, for Komurasaki, the famous beauty of the Yoshiwara, was the very girl whom several months before Gompachi had rescued from the robbers' den and restored to her parents in Mikana. He had left her in prosperity and affluence, and now they met in a common resort in Yedo.

"What is this!" cried Gompachi, when he had recovered from his surprise. "How is it that I find you here in the Yoshiwara?" And Komurasaki, divided between joy and shame, answered, weeping: "After you left us last year, calamity and reverses fell upon our house, and when my parents became poverty-stricken, I was at my wit's end to know how to support them. So I sold this wretched body of mine to the master of this house and sent the money to my father and mother. In spite of this, misfortunes multiplied, for they died in misery and grief. Lives there in this wide world so unhappy a wretch as I! Now that I have you again—you who are so strong—help me in my weakness! You saved me once; do not, I implore you, desert me now!" As she told her pitiful tale, tears streamed from her eyes.

FROM ŌSAKA TO KŌBE

“‘This is indeed a sad story,’ replied Gompachi, much affected by the recital. ‘However, mourn no more, for I will not forsake you. It is true that I am too poor to redeem you from servitude, but at any rate I will contrive so that you shall be tormented no more. Love me, therefore, and put your trust in me.’ When she heard him speak so kindly, she was comforted and wept no more, but poured out her whole heart to him and forgot her past sorrows in the joy of meeting him again.

“When it came time to separate, Gompachi embraced her tenderly. On his return home, he could not banish from his thoughts the beautiful Komurasaki. All day long he thought of her alone, and so it came about that he went daily to the Yoshiwara to see her. If any accident detained him, she, missing the accustomed visit, would become anxious and write to him to inquire the cause of his absence. At last, pursuing this course of life, his stock of money ran short, and he was ashamed of showing himself penniless at ‘The Three Sea-Coasts.’ Then it was that a wicked spirit arose within him, and he went out and murdered a man, and having robbed him of his money, carried it to the Yoshiwara.

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

"From bad to worse is an easy step, and the tiger that has once tasted blood is dangerous. Blinded and infatuated by his excessive love, Gompachi kept on slaying and robbing, so that while his outer man was fair to look upon, the heart within was that of a hideous devil. At length it came to pass that Gompachi's crimes became notorious, and the government set spies upon his track. Soon he was caught red-handed and arrested. His evil deeds having been fully proved against him, he was carried off to the execution ground and beheaded as a common malefactor.

"Now when Gompachi was dead, his family claimed his body and buried him in the grounds of the temple Daichō-ji.

"When Komurasaki heard the people at the Yoshiwara gossiping about her lover's end, her grief knew no bounds. She fled secretly from 'The Three Sea-Coasts' and came to Daichō-ji, where she threw herself upon the newly-made grave. Long she prayed and bitterly she wept over the tomb of him whom, with all his faults, she had loved so well; then, drawing a dagger from her girdle, she plunged it into her breast and died. When the priests of the temple saw what had happened, they wondered greatly, and

FROM ŌSAKA TO KŌBE

were astonished at the loving faithfulness of this beautiful girl. Taking compassion on her, they laid her side by side with Gompachi, in one grave, and over the grave they placed a stone, planting beside it an orange tree with interlacing branches, as a symbol that the two sleepers had entered into their eternal rest in perfect and mutual accord.

“Upon the crumbling tombstone has been pasted this appeal:

“In the old days she who pined for the beauty of her lover was as fair to look upon as are the flowers of today. Now beneath the moss of this tombstone all has perished save their names, and amid the changes of a fitful world the tomb itself is fast decaying. Stranger, bestow an alms to preserve this tomb, and we will bless you from our hearts.”

五

But Ōsaka's palette holds other colors than gray. The city is arteried by a vermilion river and veined with amethystine canals that, Venice-like, flow under arched bridges and between inquisitive houses which, in their eagerness to see,

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

lean far over the waters. Their timbers are polished by the years into chestnut browns that mate well with the warm yellows of bamboo curtains. Overhanging barred windows and projecting balconies merely add to the beauty of nature, which is "God's handwriting" and which nothing can destroy.

And there is Dōtombori, the Street of Forgetfulness, friezed from end to end with gaudy lanterns and festooned with flying streamers that advertise, in all the colors of the rainbow, the beauties of the "silver screen." From open doorways comes the blare of orchestras, playing, not to charm the ear, but to rivet attention, lest the theatrical posters should escape notice.

"The Whirlpool of Death," "One Who Never Comes Back," "The Demon of Gold." Toward such lurid announcements as these clatters a long queue of men, women, and children—for Japan is badly smitten with the cinema fever. At the entrance doorway an usher attendant confiscates all the noisy clogs, giving in exchange a huge wooden slab—a Japanese and his shoes are soon parted! Quickly the silent crowd glide in, dropping down upon mats of straw to tense enjoyment of the tragedy now

FROM ŌSAKA TO KŌBE

flickering to its close in an orgy of blood and suicide. Their favorite hero expires to save his samurai honor! The women mop their streaming eyes with kimono sleeves, and even the men are moved to a display of emotion, notable in a people usually so stoical.

A Western film is flashed upon the curtain, to find them interested but unsympathetic, not understanding. A storyteller, sitting at one side in the gloom of the stage, has to tell the audience what the play is all about, and strange and weird are some of his explanations. The eternal sex play, unsavorily presented by some of the cheaper productions, gives but a poor and false idea of America's social customs.

六

There are three entertainments that are as yet absolutely untouched by foreign influence, and from the Yagura, a high tower at the far end of the street, comes the steady beat of drums announcing one of them. It tells the holiday crowd that a wrestling match is about to begin, and at the first sound an eager throng rushes towards the arena. Of all sports this is the most popular.

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

Wrestling goes back to remote antiquity—to be exact, to 23 B.C. In those days it was encouraged as a military art. Battles were then fought at close quarters, in hand-to-hand combats, and victory fell to the more skilled wrestler. But the time arrived when there was no further demand for wrestlers in the army, and the more famous among them began wrestling for reward. These appeared under the patronage of the great princes, who considered themselves personally disgraced when their elected champion was defeated.

Today, a Japanese gentleman of sporting proclivities treats his favorite wrestler in much the same manner as does a Spaniard his preferred bull-fighter. Both shower them with costly gifts. And as in the bull arena, a wrestling enthusiast will often throw to the victor his cane, his hat, or anything close at hand, with the certainty that it will be returned next day, to be redeemed by a present of money.

The overcrowded enclosure reeks with humanity, expectantly squatting around a sanded mound of earth. It is encircled by two rings of twelve rice bales and protected by a roof supported by four posts, wrapped with colored cloths that symbolize the four seasons. Perched

FROM ŌSAKA TO KŌBE

high on one corner of the roof is a miniature shrine enclosing the guardian Deity of wrestlers, to whom, early this morning, prayers have been offered, together with gifts of rice and water.

The afternoon performance starts with a parade of champions. Gross-looking creatures they are, enormous and bloated, with huge bulging paunches, veritable anomalies among this delicately formed race. All are naked except for a loin cloth and an elaborately embroidered apron of gorgeous silk and gold, given by some patron—and removed when wrestling. Two of the paraders are super-champions—undefeated—and are wearing about their waists in addition to the apron a great white rope of bleached hemp—the *Yokozuna*, it is called,—originally conferred upon champion wrestlers by a noble family in Kyōtō.

The parade over, four referees enter, to crouch quietly at the foot of the four pillars. Then appears the umpire, who announces the names of the two wrestlers for the first bout. Dressed in a flowing kimono of gray silk tied with a gold-embroidered sash, he carries in his hand a crimson-tasseled war-fan, his insignia of office. This is the fan given the first official

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

umpire when appointed by the Emperor in the year 1100, and this umpire claims to be the thirty-third in direct descent from the first appointee.

Two wrestlers enter the arena. After taking a drink of water, emblematic of the water given the dying, and scattering salt about the arena to drive away evil, they are ready for the match.

With foreheads pressed together, they look fiercely into each other's eyes until the umpire considers them spiritually fit to meet. Then they take position, braced on all fours, frog-like. Tochigi-yama, weighing over four hundred pounds, a mountain of reddish flesh, and Tsunehohana, his arms and thighs jellied with fat, crouch motionless, face to face. The umpire signals with his fan, and the mighty strain begins. They grip and pull and push, breathing with the sharp sound of whistles, while the umpire, hopping about on the flanks of the battling giants, looks like some tiny insect goading them into madness.

A wrestler is defeated not only when he is thrown, but if he is thrust out of the ring or if any part of his body touches the ground. This makes weight of more importance than

FROM ŌSAKA TO KŌBE

mere strength, so that contrary to our notions of training, all wrestlers attempt to put on flesh, eating and drinking in quantities that are simply phenomenal.

Tochigi-yama wins. His opponent slinks out of the ring. He himself squats to one side until the umpire, with a touch of his fan, announces him victor. Then he marches triumphantly back to his dressing-room, down a pathway adorned with artificial flowers, one of which he plucks and proudly thrusts into his queue.

七

Somewhere between Ōsaka and Kōbe is to be found one of the largest of the six thousand Eta settlements, whose very existence gives the lie to Japan's much-vaunted claim, "Apostles of equality for all men."

Three million human beings, differing in no physical or racial characteristic from the ordinary Japanese, struggle through life as outcasts and pariahs; their very name, Eta, means "much defilement."

Shintōism, from its very beginning, laid special stress upon purity, without which the gods

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

would refuse intercourse with mankind. The most important part in the Shintō service is purification, and the two worst of impurities are blood and death defilement. Elaborate ceremonies of purification are required of a man polluted by blood, even in battle, before he can once more worship at a shrine. Far worse is death defilement, the touching of a dead body or remaining in the same room with one.

The later introduction of Buddhism, so fanatically opposed to the taking of life, only served to accentuate this aversion to blood and death defilement. Anyone who slaughtered animals, buried the dead, served as executioner and scavenger, or had in any way to do with death, was held in utter abhorrence.

To be sure, Emperor Meiji more than fifty years ago abolished all discrimination against this despised class, but force of habit is strong. For so many years have the Eta been subjected to all sorts of persecution, humiliation, and tyranny by the rest of the nation that a prejudice going beyond all reason has become firmly rooted in the minds of the people. In schools, Eta children are so despised that other children will not associate with them. Eta teachers are held in such detestation that pupils will not re-

FROM ŌSAKA TO KŌBE

main under them. Eta army conscripts are treated roughly, and marriage between an Eta and an ordinary Japanese is practically an impossibility.

Their social position may be compared to that of the Jewish race in Russia at the time of the irrational Christian persecution, ostracism, and segregation. And strangely enough, as though the Japanese themselves recognized the analogy, a recent translation into Japanese of *The Wandering Jew* places an Eta in the title rôle.



Only fifty-five years ago, when Kōbe was chosen as one of the five ports open to foreigners, it was nothing but a small fishing village. Today it is the great door through which passes most of Japan's sea trade.

But the sea, despite its wondrous beauty, usually brings in its wake an unpleasant scum, and in the far background of even this "Model settlement" is a cesspool, putrid with the wreckage of human derelicts, in whose mire thousands of Japan's Eta castaways have sought oblivion.

Inspired, perhaps, by the half success of

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

down-trodden labor, their long-smoldering resentment recently broke forth in the most serious mass movement of modern Japan, for in no other social disturbance has there ever before been occasion for the calling out of troops. For their battle device they have chosen the thorn of martyrdom, and their published Declaration of Independence is notable:

“O long-persecuted brethren, stand firmly together. Our ancestors were made the victims of base class distinction and discrimination. They were the martyrs of industry. For flaying animals the hearts of our ancestors were torn asunder and spitted with contumely. That was the shameful way in which they were paid for their labor! But amid the curse of nightmares, the human blood in our ancestors did not dry up. Because it was not exhausted, we, the inheritors of that blood, are now in an age when mankind is about to be converted to God. The time has come for the sacrificed to fling back the stigma, for the martyrs to be congratulated upon their death crown, and for us to pride ourselves on being Eta.”

Rumor has it—whether true or not it is impossible to verify—that “Kōbe’s saint,” Toyohiko Kagawa, is the author of this declaration,



HARBOR SCENE IN KŌBE

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

and the fact that he is daily fighting social distinctions of every kind, trying to break down the class wall that kills all sense of brotherhood, lends color to the report.

In all Japan Kagawa is probably the only one who is literally following the teachings of Christ and giving all he has to the poor—even his life, which is absolutely consecrated to the service of humanity.

He is living in the heart of Kōbe's slums, never possessing two coats, though he might easily have all the luxuries and comforts that money could buy. His books are in demand everywhere. Newspapers and magazines offer extravagant prices for his every article. Yet all the money he receives for both books and articles goes to the poor.

His first book, *Across the Death Line*, came to the public only because he needed money for his "Flowers of the Slums," who he claims are victims not of heredity but of environment.

This book has gone through three hundred editions in two years, and it is still the best seller in Japan. It is supposed to be Kagawa's autobiography, with all the scenes and characters taken from life. It gives the picture of a young man passing through temptation and

FROM ŌSAKA TO KŌBE

mental struggle into a life of sacrifice and unselfish service.

Foreign readers find the hero's abundant tears appallingly frequent, but then, contrary to superficial opinion, the Japanese are of a tearful, sentimental temperament—the result of inherited tendencies. These tendencies are also responsible for the consummate conceit and the frequent suicidal thoughts so graphically depicted by Kagawa.

XII

MODERN LITERATURE

*Mado no yuki hotaru no hikari shirube ni te
Fumi mishi hito no shitawaruru kana.*

Time was when frail light of fireflies in their cage
castle illumined the page of the diligent in summer;
and in winter glistening snow, heaped high without
the window, shed its pale beams.

THE influence of Christianity upon recent productions of Japanese literature is most conspicuous. Only last year there came from the pen of Mushakōji, one of the leading writers of popular fiction, so strange a piece of work as to attract widespread attention. It is entitled *Atoni Kitaru Mono*—One Who Comes After.

Follower: Master, your face wears a troubled look today, one moment alight with joy, and one moment shadowed with sorrow.

Master: True. I am lonely, though a great joy knocks at my heart.

Follower: What mean you, Master?

MODERN LITERATURE

Master: Even as I was baptizing on the shore of the river Jordan yesterday, there appeared before me a certain young man whom at first sight I received unto my heart as he for whom I had long waited. And now my mission is ended.

Follower: Has he, then, really come?

Master: Yes, he has come, and all men will follow him. But that is my mission. He brings to me both sunshine and rain. I rejoice like one who meets with a long-lost sweetheart. But a sweetheart bringing me a sentence of death; and how can I help but suffer!

Follower: What mean you by sentence of death?

Master: I have completed my mission. Life holds nothing more for me. The time has come when you, my disciples, must leave me.

Follower: Master, I will never leave you.

Master: But it is our Father's will. We must follow a mightier Master when that Master shall come.

Follower: But, Master, would you teach me that I should leave my present wife for a prettier girl, if such a girl should come?

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

Master: Place not your Master and your wife on the same footing. You innocent! But I understand you. I sympathize with you. Forget not that to love your own soul is to love your Father. Farewell, my faithful disciples. (*He steals away happily, like the new leaves of grass in the spring.*) My soul longs for the spring. We are born only to die. My mission is ended, my reward is the life beyond. How radiant His presence! How noble and beautiful His face!"

二

The old type of Japanese writing with its scenes laid in the "Nightless Quarter," so familiar a theme in the Tokugawa days, is fast disappearing. Even the much-loved historical romances are giving way to the new literature. And comparatively few are those fantastic tales, once so dear to the naïve heart of Japan, such as the story of a young man traveling over the mountains in mid-winter when the mountain trail is wiped out by a heavy fall of snow. He gives himself up for lost until by chance he catches sight of a faint light glimmering in the valley below. He stumbles toward it, finally

MODERN LITERATURE

reaching a woodcutter's shack, in which, to his great surprise, he finds a beautiful girl living alone. She bids him welcome and brings him food and drink while he warms himself at the big fire that burns brightly in the single room. In answer to his questions, the girl tells him of her noble descent and the misfortune that had obliged her to seek so remote a place. For hours they talk; then, side by side, they lie down to sleep. The next morning, when the young traveler awakes, he finds himself lying in a patch of tall grass, with a skeleton, bleached by time, beside him.

三

In a land whose literature is virtually a closed book for the rest of the world, the inclination is probably to overestimate the few things that come within the range of one's understanding, but it is fairly obvious that modern Japanese fiction is patterned after the work of Europe and America. Russian and French models are the special favorites, and many of their thoughts and ideals have been clothed in Japanese garb.

"Nature is nature, neither good nor bad, neither beautiful nor ugly. We are free to

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

write as we see it," says Kosugi, the novelist, and under the sway of this naturalistic tendency, sex literature inundated the country, to give way in turn to another vogue.

A fair example of the present realistic school is a book by Naoya Shiga, *Han's Crime*. This is the story of the dramatic death of the wife of Han, a trick circus performer, killed at an afternoon performance.

Twice a day for years Han's wife had played her silent part in his sensational act without the slightest accident. She would stand motionless against a soft pine board, and Han, twenty feet away, would hurl knives at the board, outlining the figure of his wife in quivering blades. This afternoon the last knife thrown pierced his wife's heart, and she died instantly.

Was it accidental?

Judge: Did you love your wife?

Han: Yes, she was all in all to me, and then a child was born.

Judge: Why did you cease loving her then?

Han: I could not forgive her. The child was not mine.

Judge: Did you know the man?

MODERN LITERATURE

Han: Yes.

Judge: Was he a friend of yours?

Han: A friend of many years, and the "Go-between" who arranged our marriage.

Judge: How soon after you married was this child born?

Han: Six months.

Judge: Is it true that the baby died shortly after birth?

Han: Yes, the baby died.

Judge: How did the baby die?

Han: Of suffocation when nursing.

Judge: Was it an intentional act?

Han: My wife never confessed.

Judge: Did you ever question her?

Han: Never. I accepted the baby's death as full reparation for the past, and I tried to be charitable even in my thoughts.

Judge: Tried? By which you mean your thoughts were often bitter?

Han: Yes, when I looked in her face and felt the close tie which held us together, I hated her so that evil thoughts often came to me.

Judge: Why did you not divorce her?

Han: I was weak. My wife said if I divorced her she would die. What could I do?

Judge: Did your wife love you?

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

Han: No. Her life was empty.

Judge: Then why would she die if you divorced her?

Han: She had no other home. Her family were all dead.

Judge: Have you ever had an impulse to kill your wife?

Han: I often wished she would die.

Judge: I mean, did you ever resolve to murder her?

Han: Never, but the thought has flashed through my mind.

Judge: When did you think of it last?

Han: The night before her death. I could not sleep. I was haunted with frightful nightmares. I saw my whole life a failure because of my wife. She must die. Suppose I should kill her? I burned with a desire to be free from her. But so dastardly an act would be impossible. The agony of mind following would be a living death. And with this thought, these terrors faded from my mind, and later as I stood face to face with my wife, I had no thought to kill her. My sensations were those of shame, and for the first time in my life, I felt unskilled in my art. Cautiously I threw the first knife,

MODERN LITERATURE

trying to assure my inward self that my aim was still true. Blade after blade I threw with perfect accuracy. As I raised the last one in my hand, I felt fear in all its horror and death hanging over the face of that silent figure. Blindly I hurled the knife, and like a flash my wife dropped dead, pierced through the heart. As I leaned over her body, I shed great tears of sorrow. I had no fears for myself. Even suspecting friends who knew of our unhappiness could bring no proof that I had with intention killed my wife. There was no evidence. Calmly I awaited this trial, until suddenly that mysterious questioning again knocked at my heart. Did you in cold blood kill your wife? All self-confidence left me.

All eyes turned upon the Judge, who in silence wrote down one word—"Innocent."



The work of Takeo Arishima, the best loved of the new writers, belongs to the school of idealism, and his life, if not his death, plainly showed his idealistic tendency.

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

Inheriting a very considerable fortune, he gave it all away, parceling his farm land among his own tenants and distributing his money among the poor.

To Akiko Hatano, the woman he hopelessly loved, he offered the only solution that seemed possible to him—the “marriage” whose certificate is death. Joyously she accepted, and the two committed double suicide. With everything in life to live for, he left it all of his own free will.

“Love is not passive,” he once wrote, “love is giving oneself if need be. The joy or sorrow of one is the joy or sorrow of the other. There is no thought of sacrifice or return—merely a privilege to do, for which love is thankful.”

He wrote of death, saying that “a fellow named Death is the most influential person in the world, and when one thinks of the mischief he does, it is impossible not to detest him. Soon he will come with a mop in his hand and wipe me up like some dirty spot on the floor. It is not that, however, which makes me unhappy, but rather the realization of how little use I am to the world.”

The last words Arishima wrote were found on his desk in the room where, in front of the fam-

MODERN LITERATURE

ily altar, he lay dead beside the body of his love, Akiko.

"There is no one to blame. As to good and evil, every one is controlled by destiny. We have been faithful only to our destiny.

". . . Day by day my life grew darker, but as soon as I found Akiko, all shadows passed away. That is enough for me.

". . . It is already past midnight. We are holding the last ceremony before the family shrine. Some might call such a scene solemn, others pathetic, but we are like two happy children playing a game. I have never before realized that death was powerless in the presence of love.

". . . I am unhappy only when I think of my mother and my three boys, but the three are good brothers and will spend their days happily if they remain good friends. . . ."

His most popular tale is the one entitled *To My Little Children*.

"Your mother died not many years after you were born, taking from you, my little children, the very essence of love. Your life was early darkened!

"From the time of your birth everything in

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

my life changed, and although I worked hard, I was always dissatisfied with my work. Often, sitting alone in my study, I asked myself the reason why. Why was I unhappy? Had I chosen wisely in marrying? Why could I not use the labor and energy spent in the home on my own work?

"In my disorder of mind, I treated you and your mother hard-heartedly. When you cried, I abused you, and if your mother interrupted my writing with some little household question, I would stand up in anger and beat my hands upon the desk. How unbearably lonely I was, but how soon fate punished me for my lack of sympathy and understanding!

"Your mother's tender love and her constant watchfulness over you day and night proved too much for her strength. She was taken with a raging fever which developed into consumption, and one lonely autumn day I carried her away to the hospital, leaving you alone at home. Each day after my work was done, I would take one or two of you to the hospital to see your mother. How tenderly she, who did not know her trouble was consumption, would try to gather you in her arms, longing to hold her treasures. How hard it was for me to try and

MODERN LITERATURE

keep you from her bedside, feeling like the man who, faithful to his lord, is misunderstood.

"The street lamps were usually alight by the time we returned home, and you were tired, but not until I had carefully soothed you to sleep would I steal into my study and work. You would often cry out in your sleep or waken for a drink of milk, and during those nights I slept but fitfully. The morning would find me dull-eyed and heavy-hearted. One day when I entered your mother's room at the hospital, I found her sitting up in bed, looking out of the window. She asked if she could come home, saying that the frost-bitten chrysanthemums and the withered leaves on the maple trees made her lonely. But her loneliness was the longing to be with you.

"The day arranged to bring your mother home was cold and stormy, and I hastened to the hospital intending to postpone her departure, but I was too late. Her room was empty, and the old woman nurse was slowly putting the furniture to rights. I hurried home to find you gathered round your mother, laughing and happy. Tears trickled silently down my cheeks. In our united happiness, we had again become inseparable.

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

"But the cold of the northern province proved too severe, and I was obliged to hurry south with you and your sick mother. Snow fell incessantly the night we left the home where you were born, and I shall never forget the faces of those who sadly bade us farewell. After a weary two days' journey, we reached Tōkyō, where your mother moved into a villa, on the seashore of Kamakura, while you and I stayed at an inn near by, visiting her daily. For a time she seemed stronger, and occasionally we would all go down to the sea and pass many happy hours on the warm sand. Happy hours that glided all too swiftly away, for Destiny's work was yet unfinished.

"On the second of August your mother died. The most sublime part of your mother's will, which I hope you will read some day, was a paragraph intended for you. She writes: 'It is unkind to make death known to a child. Please let our children pass the day merrily with the servants during my burial ceremony.' She feared that her cold form in death would sadden your hearts and embitter your memories.

"At the time of your mother's death, you were in the mountains of Shinano. Your uncle wished you taken to see her, but I earnestly



WHERE SNOW LIES DEEP UPON
A VILLAGE STREET

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

begged him to keep you in the mountains. Perhaps the time will come when you will think me a cruel father. You are still small. When you are as old as I, you will forgive and appreciate my doing as your mother wished.

"Since the death of your mother, I have wandered alone through the highways of life, resolved not to go astray. When I married, I did not know how to make the best of my abilities. The world thought me a timid, stupid, good-for-nothing, pitiable man, and no one dared to show me my timidity, stupidity, and inability. This your mother did. Then I began to find power in my weakness. I found work where I could not work; courage where I was afraid, and sympathy where I had had none. I realized my imperfections, and with this power I can now live another life. She has not lived in vain.

"When it rains and our house is dark and lonely, you sometimes come into my study, calling 'papa!' Two great tears roll down your cheeks. Oh! my little ones, why those tears in your innocent eyes? Your sorrow only makes my world more lonely! And nothing pierces my heart more keenly than when I hear your bright voices call, 'Good morning, Mamma!'

MODERN LITERATURE

as you bow before your mother's picture. Then I am thrilled and see an eternal world before me.

"Life goes on unchanged, unsorrowing, though many wives and mothers die. But you and I will deeply experience the loneliness of life without your mother. A small thing is not always small; a great thing is not always great. All depends on the point of view.

"You are still too young to understand that through this great loss you and I have stepped deeper into life, and if a man lives life at all, he should enter into the depth of it.

"But because life is lonely we must not dwell in sorrow and sit down conquered. You and I, like animals who have tasted blood, have tasted love. Let us now go and work and master our loneliness. I have loved you and will love you forever. All I ask of you, who have taught me to love you, is that you accept my thankfulness. When you are grown men, I may be dead. Whether I am or not, you must not be troubled by thoughts of me, but go on bravely alone, like young lions who eat their stricken parents in order to store up greater energy!

"It is long past midnight, and in the silence

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

of the night I hear only your peaceful breathing. Before me are some roses, sent by your aunt to the spirit of your mother. They stand beside her picture, reminding me of the day this picture was taken. Your mother was with child and troubled with an indefinable fear and hope. When I told her I would take some pictures of her, to my surprise she entered my study in full dress and paint, and with a beautiful smile, said: 'A woman with child is like a man going to war. She should give birth to a good child, or she should die herself. So I have come to you in full dress.' Then I laughed heartlessly, but now I think soberly of her words.


"Whatever the failures of my life, and whatever temptation may conquer me, you will never find anything impure in my path. With wisdom you must step out from where I fall. Little ones! start on life's journey with blessings in your hearts towards your father and mother. The way before you is long and dark, but with courage the fight is yours. Go, go bravely, little ones!"

XIII

SHIKOKU

Shira tsubaki ochiru oto nomi tsukiyo kana.

Naught breaks the moonlight hush save now and then
a head that falls from the camellia bush.



It was the hour when the heavens and the waters melt together in one vast silver mirror, reflecting phantom hills and mountains in the sky, bringing vivid memories of age-old Chinese paintings. From the deck of the *Murasaki*, slowly steaming out of Kōbe's harbor, the boat seemed to be pushing its way through unreality. Little by little, the sea breeze stole higher and teased the clouds, when the mists dissolved, disclosing the long, pine-fringed beach and Suma's far-famed "Moon-seeing-hill."

The moon is so personal a friend to the Japanese that its birthday is recognized and celebrated like that of any mere mortal. Each time a "crescent" is born, moon-teahouses, gay with lights and music, overflow with a merry crowd, who drink much *sake* and shout aloud

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

impromptu verses composed in her honor. But Suma's hill-teahouse, sunk to veranda rail in sweet blossoms, has for a thousand years been the poetic retreat of the esoteric. There, on moon-gazing nights, still lingers the spirit of Old Japan, whose etiquette demanded silence in the presence of the Goddess Luna. The quiet is absolute.

The silent *nesans* slide back the *shoji*, and over the water's edge peeps the golden moon, covering the beach in a silver sheen. The world is flooded in ghostly splendor. Fairy moonbeams play among the heavily-neededled pine boughs, dancing with their shadows as they move to and fro with the motion of the trees.

Except for the occasional thud of flower blossoms as they fall from the latticed veranda, not a sound is heard until the yellow light fades away. Then nature awakens: "The winds begin to blow, the sea murmurs, and the hills reply."

二

Islands, nothing but islands. Islands of weird, fantastic shapes, strewn the waters of the Inland Sea, like the fragments of some shattered continent. Thousands of them, serv-

SHIKOKU

ing no apparent purpose except to make a marine puzzle, a labyrinth maze, through which the *Murasaki* cautiously noses her way. Now she swings around a village, pushed to the very water's edge by towering rocks; now she glides through a wall of hills, splattered with crooked pines, wherein hide fishermen's homes, of which only the roofs can be seen, brown-thatched.

Through the soft mist, like fairy characters upon a huge stage, more and still more dream islands keep appearing and disappearing. On beaches of golden sand, rise those red gateways, "the way of the gods," which are as familiar in Japan as the crucifix is in Catholic lands. In front of one of these gates stands a solitary figure, bowing low to the shrine within, just as the sun's last ray flings a shining carpet over the still waters. Across this dancing shaft of light dart tiny fishing-boats, manned by little yellow athletes naked as antique sculpture, all scurrying for harbor. At Kinoe, the Beach of Trees, are a hundred boats swinging at anchor, for Kinoe is the boat-hospital of the Inland Sea, to which all storm-sick crafts turn for cure, and all day long is heard the sound of the calking irons, cauterizing the wounds made by wind and

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

weather. Now in the gathering twilight, once a lamp has been lit and a cup of *sake* placed before it to appease the sea gods, the sailors are idling on the deck. From the shore comes the inviting tinkle of *samisens*.

三

This Inland Sea is the cradle of the deep which rocked Japan's first-born. Before the beginning of the world of man, there existed numerous divinities, the last being Izanagi and Izanami, the Creator and the Creatress. United in marriage, they created the various islands of the Japanese archipelago, and the Island Awaji was the first.

"His Augustness, the Male-who-Invites, and her Augustness, the Female-who-Invites, standing upon the floating bridge of Heaven, pushed down the Jeweled Spear given them by the Heavenly Deities, and stirred with it; whereupon, when they had stirred the brine till it made a curdling noise, they drew up the spear, and the brine that dripped from the end piled up and became an Island. Then the Creator and Creatress descended from Heaven on to this Island."

SHIKOKU

The spot where they first set foot is today marked by a curious mound that stands high above the flat rice fields of Awaji. In the side of the mound is a great hole scooped out by generations of women, who mix fragments of this earth with water and drink it, that their first-born may be blessed.



Next Izanagi and Izanami created the Island of Shikoku. This island has one body and four faces, and each face has a name. So one province is called Iyo, Lovely Princess; another, land of Sanuki, Prince Good Boiled Rice; a third, the land of Awa, Princess of Great Food; and the fourth, the land of Tosa, Brave Good Youth; so they are known to this very day. Here, far from the beaten path, manners are yet unspoiled and the customs and usages of feudal days still survive.

As might be expected of the second island-child of the Japanese Creator, Shikoku claims the most ancient bathing resort in the Empire. Shortly after the island's birth, the brother gods, Onamuji and Sukunabiko, were appointed its guardians. The provinces of Iyo and Sanuki

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

fell under the control of Onamuji, who ruled by force; while his brother Sukunabiko watched over his wards, Awa and Tosa, with kindly affection.

At the end of the first year's reign, the two gods met in conference at Dogo. Onamuji, to his intense chagrin, discovered that his brother's lenient wardenship showed far better results than his own sterner methods, and in a paroxysm of rage he fell unconscious to the ground. Kindly Sukunabiko, thoroughly alarmed, rushed to a near-by spring and scooping up some of the water in his hands threw it over the stricken man, whereupon Onamuji immediately stood up, completely cured.

Today, surrounded by many inns, a typical old-style Japanese building roofs over this spring of legend. After wearying themselves with prayers at Kompira's famous shrine, visitors from far and near flock to this only hot spring on the island, to bathe and boil away their aches and pains.

五

Despite Imperial proclamations and local regulations, many of the peasantry of Shikoku

SHIKOKU

cling tenaciously to the old manner of reckoning time. They even stretch their traditional obstinacy so far as to celebrate some of the same festivals twice, first according to the new, then according to the old calendar,—New Year's, for example, by the old calendar comes in the middle of February,—so as to make certain of keeping on good terms with the invisible powers that be.

In conversation some of the older people even use the ancient months of the zodiac. Instead of admitting that he was born in August, a Shikoku peasant will unsmilingly inform you that he is a Goat and his mother a Rat.

So it happens that when in Tōkyō the festival for boys has long since come and gone, in Shikoku preparations for it are only just beginning. In the courtyards of the fortunate houses, tall bamboo poles have been erected, and on the tip-top, swimming in the breeze, are cloth and paper carp. There is one for each boy in the family, a huge fish thirty feet long for the eldest, the others diminishing in size, until a tiny one for the baby is reached.

The carp is the king of all fish, the only one strong enough to swim against the swift currents of the mountain stream and even leap the

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

waterfalls. So will the sturdy boy, overcoming all obstacles, make his way in the world and rise to fame and fortune.

There is much sorrowing within the houses that fly no carp. The gods have sent no children,—or perhaps only a woman-child, and there is no one to continue the family name.

Confucius taught that the extinction of a family was the greatest of all afflictions. One's forefathers must not lack descendants to pay them honor. The dead, in order to continue happy, demand certain ceremonies and food offerings from the living, and the man who dies without a son receives no such offerings, thereby exposing himself to perpetual hunger.

In order to prevent the family line from becoming extinct, the practice of concubinage was considered quite legitimate, even in the Imperial family. For the same reason adoption is now universal. It is usually the younger son of some relative who is adopted, unless there be a daughter, in which case her husband is the one chosen. On marrying, he abandons his own family ancestors and name for those of his wife.

Family, which is the very foundation of Japanese social life, embraces not only everyone connected by blood relationship, however re-

SHIKOKU

mote, but those adopted into the family as well, and it includes both the living and the dead. Every member of the family is subject to the family council, which, with the sanction of the law, passes upon many matters that in the Occident are left to courts of law—such as marriage, divorce, and rights of property. In case of financial disaster, all unite and share the loss. In sickness, unemployment, and old age, it is the family that provides. All have less, but none are left in want. The rise and fall, the success and failure, the glory and shame of one individual affects all who bear that name; and this family solidarity is one of the characteristics of the old Japan, that has persisted in spite of present altered conditions.

六

A farmer and his wife are plowing the black soil with a plow of the period of the gods. The thirsty field is fed from irrigating canals by a water-wheel of broad leaves, which a naked man, much the color of the soil, is monotonously treading. When the barley ripens, the stalks of grain will be pulled through metal combs or threshed with an archaic flail, in whose forked



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AFTER THE DAY'S WORK IN PADDY FIELD

SHIKOKU

end swings a bar of wood. And to separate the grain from the chaff, it will be thrown into the air, as in early biblical days, to be winnowed by the breezes.

Year in and year out, from dawn to dusk, they toil with uncomplaining devotion, even then dragging from the soil an amount of money so small, according to printed statistics, that to make both ends meet is arithmetically impossible—though in actual life it is somehow managed. Most of these peasants are unspeakably poor, but all are apparently contented. Ask any one of the men knee-deep in the slime of his paddy field, the size of an exaggerated pocket handkerchief, why he doesn't move away, and his reply will be: "What, leave the ground on which twenty-five generations of august forefathers have labored? Go away from the land of the gods, from the cherry blossoms and the shrines? For ten thousand years would I be troubled by the ghosts of my ancestors!"

七

Perched on high *geta*, a bride of three days is tottering along the road to Takamatsu, on the way to make the formal wedding visit to her

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

parents, as required by etiquette. Her face, long and oval, is rigidly immobile beneath a glaze of enamel. The delicately cut mouth, sensitive nose, and almond-shaped eyes, bridled as those of a cat half dozing before the fire, are doll-like in expression. Her hair, gleaming with amber-colored pins, is covered by a strange silver head-dress, and her kimono is stiff with embroidery. The dress, the manner of walking, the visit, each has been dictated by etiquette, for custom or etiquette influences every phase of Japanese life.

When the parents of a young man, or a young woman, feel that the proper time has arrived for marriage, custom says they must seek a *nakodo*, a "go-between," who will seek out a proper mate. The *nakodo* is usually a married friend, for the duties are delicate, no less than acquainting each of the parties involved, with the nature, habits, good and bad qualities, and even bodily infirmities, of the other.

The *nakodo*, having selected some girl who, in his opinion, meets the requirements of a man in search of a wife, calls upon the girl's parents. Should his proposals be favorably received, he arranges a *miai* ("see-meeting") at a theater, restaurant, or, when the flowers are in bloom,

SHIKOKU

at a park. There the two meet as if by accident, the go-between casually introducing them. Later he calls at both houses to hear the result of the meeting. If both are pleased with this hasty glimpse of one another, a "lucky day"¹ is chosen for the proposal, when the *nakodo* makes a formal call upon the girl's parents, taking as presents an *obi*, silk for kimonos, and *sake*, for which a receipt is given as evidence of consent. After this, neither party can retreat.

All this happily completed, an auspicious date is fixed for the wedding. A day or two before the wedding, the bride's trousseau—usually chests of drawers filled with dresses, bedding, toilet articles, musical instruments and utensils for tea-making and flower arrangement—is sent to the bridegroom's house, to be placed in the room prepared for the ceremony. In the *tokonoma* (alcove) are food offerings to the gods and a stand of consecrated *sake*. Upon a table of unpainted wood of wave design has been arranged the mythical Hōrai garden of pine, bamboo, and plum trees, where, for hun-

¹ On the first month of each year the head priest of the Shrine of Ise issues an almanac in which are noted the lucky days for the current year.

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

dreds of years, Jō and Uba, the Darby and Joan of Japanese legend, lived happily. The pine symbolizes not only long life but, as the needles of the pine, falling to the ground, seldom break apart, union in adversity. The bamboo from its pliancy indicates gentleness. And the plum, which blossoms while there is yet snow on the ground, signifies fortitude in time of trouble.

No matter how poor the family, the wedding-room will always contain the seven gods of Luck flying on cranes, whose life is ten thousand years, Hotei, the god of Happiness, with his sixteen children, a treasure ship overflowing with its cargo of rice, and a large dried sea fish—*tai*, which, as the suffix of *med-e-tai*, means congratulations.

At nightfall on the evening of the wedding the bride, escorted by a company of friends all bearing lighted torches, is carried to this room of ceremony and seated on a chair before the god shelf, where the bridegroom joins her. They are alone except for two young cupbearers, who, as soon as the bridal couple are seated, place a nest of three red-lacquer cups in front of them, having previously poured the consecrated *sake* into two silver ladles, decorated one

SHIKOKU

with a male and the other with a female butterfly.

Now the cupbearer for the bride takes the top and smallest of these three cups, and fills it with *sake* from her silver ladle, and the bride drinks. Then the cupbearer for the groom fills the same cup from her ladle and the bridegroom drinks. Each drinks from the small cup three times. The second and third cup are likewise filled and drunk three times by both the bride and the groom, the woman always drinking first. *San San Kudo*, "three times three," this is called, and with the final drinking, the man and the woman are united in marriage. They are legally married as soon as the heads of the two families report to the Public Registrar, who then transfers the woman's name from her father's family to that of her husband.

Some ultra fashionable couples are now married at a Shintō temple, in imitation of a Christian wedding. In 1901, at the Hibiya Daijingu in Tōkyō, was solemnized the first Shintō wedding in Japan. Except for the presence of dancers, musicians, and priests, who announce to the enshrined deity the proposed union, appealing for divine protection and blessings upon the betrothed couple, the ceremony is much

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

the same as the traditional ceremony in the wedding-rooms, the essential feature being the traditional *sake*-drinking that consummates the pact.



The coast road is one of continued loveliness, winding for miles and miles over undulating hills that are, for the most part, wooded with clumps of emerald fir. Where the pine has lost its battle with the arid rocks above, some farming miracle has terraced the steep, inhospitable slopes with little oddly shaped rice fields, which the faintest breeze blowing across the surface ripples into waves. Into this patchwork crazy quilt, fields of mulberry trees have worked an even paler shade of green, and wherever that is seen, there is sure to be heard the clatter of looms from which have come the great skeins of silk exposed for drying in the warm sunshine.

Suddenly the highway clambers up the "Pass of Great Slopes," and far below is glimpsed a beautiful stretch of hazy sea, with a mile-long foam line lapping the rocks in minor accompaniment to the roar of the waves.

SHIKOKU

The skirting hills are uncommonly strange, some with sharp-toothed peaks of quaint formation; others low and dumpy, cubist-like in their grotesqueness. One, isolated from the rest, is dotted with eighty-eight Buddhist statues, copies of those worshiped in the eighty-eight holy places founded by Kōbō Daishi during his early wanderings in this island of his birth.

Wherever he felt inspired by the Holy Spirit, he would leave a bit of the consecrated earth brought from the sacred cities of India, establishing that spot as a place of pilgrimage, and this he did eighty-eight times. Since then, millions and millions of pilgrims have followed in his footsteps.

Shikoku's highways are literally infested with figures dressed in white—theoretically white, for the costume is never washed, the travel stains being a part of its acquired sanctity. With wallet in girdle and staff in hand, a bell jingling at the waist, these pilgrims are the living resurrection of Biblical times. Some, to be sure, have no wallet, living on the charity of the Islanders—who have been taught that if they do not give alms, they will surely receive Buddhist punishment. But for the most part they travel together in goodly numbers, mem-

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

bers of one club, which includes practically all the inhabitants of their home village.

Each member has paid to the club treasurer perhaps a cent a month, and once every year, some weeks before the pilgrimage is to start, lots are drawn, with everybody who has paid up in full participating. The dues are so modest that only three or four persons out of every hundred may expect to win a prize, but all come, magnetically drawn by the possibility. Those lucky enough to draw the numbers previously announced as prizes, are held to be specially invited by the gods, and to them is turned over the entire year's dues with which to defray the expenses of the pilgrimage.

Slowly they move by, these bands of travel-worn wanderers, their leader from time to time tapping the bell suspended from his girdle as he directs the pilgrim song of the temple whose grounds they are just entering.

"Taisan ye Noboreba ase no idekuredo nochi-no-yo omo eba nan no ku mo nashi," they sing, which, translated, means, "The way to this temple is long and difficult, but it is nothing compared to the road leading to the future world."

Some linger for a moment at the wayside statue of Dōsojin, the god of travelers. After

SHIKOKU

hanging about his neck a pair of *waraji* (straw sandals), they kneel, asking for godspeed on their journey. The others go directly to the temple, taking from a receptacle made of two thin wooden boards a visiting card, "honorable placard," which they paste on the temple pillar as proof of their call. For Kōbō Daishi said, "Observe my worship, and in honor of the God cut your name in the pillar of the Shrine, and it is as though you yourself were there for years upon years."

After worshipping Kōbō, they pray for the Emperor, the father of all; then for their ancestors, for their families, and finally for themselves. This duly finished, they visit the office of the High Priest, who stamps their books with the great seal of the temple and bids them good cheer as they start forth again.

One of their number is Haruzo Niiori, nearly seventy years old, he says, and his visiting cards are blue, proving that he has made this pilgrimage ten times; while the seals in his book, proudly opened, show that he has wandered far. There are seals for the Holy of Holies where the High Priest is the descendant of the Goddess of the Sun; for all the thirty-three sacred places of Kwannon, the divine mother

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

from whose cup of crystal pours forth holy water, each bubble containing the soul of a child; seals for the shrine whose altar fire has burned for a thousand years; for the temple to Kishi-Bojin, the protector of children; for Aizen, the Goddess of Passion, where lovers pray for union with their beloved; and for Yakushi, the God of Medicine, who gives sight to the blind. Niiori tells of ascending the long path by means of three chains, and there on the windy summit, which is so densely covered by fog that no one can look into its depths, the pilgrims washed their eyes in the sacred spring while murmuring the holy words.

Much of the time Niiori had traveled by himself, but "there are always two of us" he quaintly added, "Kōbō Daishi and I, and like the blessed Master, I will soon walk amid the stars. But until then, the old fires built from the deadwood of the past will still burn, and with my book of seals I can live in the land of Memory."

九

How quaintly picturesque, amusing, and really comfortable are the best of these native



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A FLOWER GIRL

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

inns! Unless, of course, one is the fretting slave of habit, unblessed with at least a moderate amount of that humor which "like sunshine bathes everything in genial light."

On driving into the courtyard, there will be heard a fluttering like so many pigeons, as a bevy of ebon-haired *nesans* rush out to prostrate themselves with hissing words of welcome, "*Irasshaimashi!*" (Deign, honorably, to enter our unworthy house!)

Some twenty pairs of shoes—the inn register—line the entrance way. Every man, woman, and child has been obliged to remove his foot covering before entering,—that no street dust shall mar the immaculate interior,—and the little bowing figures, with many murmurs of apology, undo those of the new visitor, slipping on the guestly feet a pair of sandals.

With little chirps and silly giggles, they lead the way up steep, winding stairs that have never been dishonored by paint, but are dark and highly polished by the constant rubbing of bare and slippered feet, then along a maze of corridors, hopelessly alike, the inner walls nothing but paper-covered slides. One of these panels is pulled aside, revealing a room that overlooks a tiny garden, where the dark reflections of

SHIKOKU

dwarf pines may be seen in the waters of a little lake. The woodwork of the room is all in natural grain, like watered silk, though the wood varies in kind and in design, as the Japanese consider uniformity fatal to imagination. In the *tokonoma* (alcove) stands a vase of exquisite porcelain, filled with blossoming sprays arranged to indicate welcome. Behind hangs a *kakemono*, a scroll painting by some famous artist or a poem descriptive of the thoughts which pleasant scenes from the window may suggest.

According to the Japanese, even as one cannot listen to different pieces of music at the same time, neither can one appreciate more than one work of art at a time. Accordingly, there is but one treasured curio—changed every few days—placed on the top of a low cupboard, whose doors are of silvered paper decorated with sketches of some fabled animals.

Soft mats of fine white straw edged with brown cover the floor, where stands the ever-present *hibachi*, a bronze urn filled with white ashes heaped into the cone shape of a miniature Fuji. Over the glowing charcoal at the peak, sizzles a heavily chased iron kettle. Near by are silken cushions, ■ tray of sweetmeats, tea

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

cups, and a gold-lacquered smoking box. Nothing else.

This room becomes, in turn, sitting-room, bed-room, or dining-room. When hunger makes itself felt, the hands are sharply clapped. From far below will come in answer a cheerful, "*Hai, Hai*," and soon will be heard bare feet slipping out of sandals as a *nesan* slides open a panel with the information that rice and fish will soon honorably eventuate. In time they appear, and in front of them kneels the *nesan*, watching every gastronomic move, embarrassingly sociable, and exhibiting great concern if the chewing and drinking are done inaudibly. Voice would show appreciation.

Darkness has come, and the big lamps of surrounding inns make golden pools amid the voluptuous green of trees, whose upper branches stretch so near that one leafy arm lies across the balcony rail. Soft lights shine through the rice paper *shoji*, silhouetting the figures preparing for the night. Bedtime is here. Several *nesans*, chatty and smiling as always, pull out from some hidden closet a number of *futons* (mattresses), which they pile three or four deep on the floor. For top covering they provide a wadded comforter of flow-

SHIKOKU

ered silk, made like an overcoat, to be slipped on, wrong side foremost.

Every sound is audible in these paper-walled rooms. The distant plaint of the Inland Sea—long swells crashing in rhythmic succession—makes itself heard even through the closed wooden shutters. The tinkling notes of *sami-sens* and the tap, tap of a pipe having its ashes knocked out comes from below. A murmur of voices sounds in the next room. You listen—an innocent eavesdropper—to a mother and child. As the baby stirs restlessly, the mother begins to croon the song of Japanese motherhood:

Sleep, baby, sleep.

Why are the honorable ears of the hare so honorably long?
'Tis because his mother ate the leaves of the locquat tree,
The leaves of the bamboo grass.

That is why his ears are so honorably long!

And after a time sleep comes to all.

At break of day there is a frightful noise, the outside wooden shutters are being pushed along their shrieking metal grooves to daytime cupboards. In streams the fair rosy light of a Japanese dawn. From then on, the room belongs to the *nesans*, who keep coming in, going

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

out, coming back, to bring something or nothing. Leave the room to bathe, and the bed vanishes. And bathing is somewhat cooperative—anyone may appear in the same washroom, half dressed or not dressed at all. But as no one has the air of even seeing anyone else, why attach importance to something that does not exist?

On leaving the inn, the landlord and his entire retinue follow the departing guests to the gate, bidding them a happy journey. On looking back from the farthest turn, they may be seen still bowing their deep farewells.



Out in the open sea lies another insular jewel, the Island of Happiness, an island from which it was intended to banish all suffering. Births and deaths were prohibited. Those taken sick were ferried across to the big polluted island, which, like all the rest of the world, was a land of sorrow. But on the Island of Happiness there was to be no weeping, no mourning.

This island was also called the Island of Meditation and Dreams. Even to this day it is strangely quiet, with none of the noises of modern life—neither the clang of street cars,

SHIKOKU

the shouts of cabman, nor the siren of automobiles. And to ears accustomed to the deafening roar of city traffic, the soft shoo-shoo of *tabi*-clad feet and the subdued voices of men and women seem like the dream-noises of a city asleep.

So beautiful was this Island of Happiness that the goddess daughters of Susano-o greatly desired it as their home. They therefore appeared in a vision to one of the inhabitants and ordered him to make their wishes known to the reigning Empress Suiko. They foretold that a strange star would appear in the sky, over the capital; and that from out of the heavens would fly a white crow carrying in his beak a twig of *sakaki*, the sacred tree of Shintōism, which the crow would drop at the feet of the Empress. And on the fulfillment of the prediction, the Empress commanded the desired temple now to be built. From this time, the island was known as Miyajima, "Temple Island." Later a shrine was erected in honor of that crow who had assisted the goddess, and the spirit of the crow was worshiped; whereupon the crow, in gratitude, declared that he and his descendants would serve the goddess as sacred crows to the end of time. Each year in early September ■



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LAKE MIYAJIMA AND THE FATHER OF ALL TORII

SHIKOKU

Shintō tablet is set up in the Shrine garden. Food offerings are placed before it, and a priest plays upon a heavenly flute. At the sound, several crows having a touch of white beneath their wings descend from the summit of Mount Misen and take the offered food. Should the service be attended by one unclean person, the crows never appear.

The temple home of the goddess was built partly over the water on piles, seeming at flood-tide to float on the surface of the sea, while the long corridors extending their wooden arms on either side look as if stretching out to meet the incoming waters.

Just in front is the father of all *torii*, the oldest of the famous scarlet gateways that stand at the entrance of every Shintō shrine in Japan. Of red lacquer, it rises from a blue sea, against a background of green. It is colossal, primitive in its simplicity.

Between the shrine and the *torii* lies the place of dragon dancing, a dance seen nowhere else in Japan and so old that no one can explain its story or its meaning.

On the place of dancing crouches and twists a glittering nightmare of scarlet and gold, its face covered with a dragon mask of brass and

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

lacquer. Not the dragon of story-book fame, but a cruel bestial swine face, a thin, pointed little snout, slightly cocked up; loathsome black bristles sprouting about the mouth and wicked listening ears.

Four musicians dressed in white play to its dancing. Round and round whirls the infernal thing, waving two black wands that invoke some demoniac power.

And all the while the sea mutters angrily around the piles beneath the temple.



The soaring rocks converge at a height of nearly two thousand feet, where, on the summit, in touch with the god of the Clouds, slumbers a little shrine in which for more than ten centuries has been burning a sacred fire. It was lighted by Kōbō Daishi himself, when, in the year 800, he climbed these stepping-stones to Heaven, to await from Buddha the message:

"Man is sinful. He is born with that nature. But when he realizes his sin and repents of it in the presence of Buddha, his sin shall be washed away, through the mercy of Buddha. When a man comes to this state of being, he

SHIKOKU

shall be said to possess a '*Samadhi*'; but he is required to possess one hundred and eight of these to become a real Buddhist."

To symbolize this message, bronze lanterns line the shore, six hundred and forty-eight in all, arranged in groups of one hundred and eight, and at nightfall they define the interlacing courts and bridges in wonderful traceries of fire.

Not till the lights have all died out does the shadow called night fall over the island. Then the outline of temple and sacred grove is hidden by clouds, like a veil before a sanctuary. Only the towering *torii* looms black against the shimmering water.

XIV

KYŪSHŪ

Asagiri ya gwa ni kaku yume no hito toru.

The mists of daybreak seem to paint as with
■ fairy brush a landscape in ■ dream.

ON the far western border of the Inland Sea is the mythological landing-place of the divine Ninigi-no-Mikoto, grandson of the sun-goddess, Amaterasu, who commanded Ninigi to descend to the "Luxuriant-Reed-Plain-Land" and rule over it, he and his descendants, forevermore.

Whereupon Ninigi left his celestial home, pushed asunder the heavenly spreading clouds, and floated down to the peak of Kirishima, which is in the Island of Kyūshū. And there today, sunk into its uppermost peak, is the Heavenly Spear. Dense clouds of steam mingled with sulphur fumes ever float about it, and from the lower flanks of the mountain spurt springs of boiling water.

Not here, however, is Kyūshū's veritable hell-plain, but at Beppu, where the coast, out-

KYŪSHŪ

wardly resembling the gentle fairness of the Riviera, is undermined with volcanic forces that are always grumbling and growling.

In years gone by these subterranean fires wrathfully burst through the porous soil in many places, and the old wounds have never healed. They still scar the hillside with festering sores that suppurate blobs of mud or a hellish liquid, ox-blood red in color. So infernal is the heat that should one tumble in, an oily film would immediately mark the plunge, while a second later a skeleton boiled clean of all flesh would float to the surface.

The sizzling water that gushes in extravagant quantities from these mountain vents is imprisoned in wooden conduits and led downhill through Beppu's streets, where kettles and saucepans over holes cut in the pipe are cooking the daily food.

Clouds of steam hover above the beach, and bathers, scooping out holes in the sand, half bury themselves, only feet and head exposed, to bake for hours. There they lie in friendly intimacy—"fat-paunched babies, rounded youth, buxom matrons, and shriveled old age."

Up on the hills, where the water, fresh from the volcanic fire, hisses with two hundred and

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

four degrees of heat, are vapor baths, cave-like structures so thickly walled and roofed with stone that the sun never penetrates within. The only light comes from lamp-wicks floating in thick oil. These dimly sketch the outstretched bodies with Dantesque effect. From time to time, out through the low, mat-covered entrance crawl men and women. They dash across the street, to stand under spouts of fresh water until the dripping mud is washed away. Then, with a clean skin as their only wearing apparel, they contentedly saunter homeward.

二

Japan as a nation spends an unreasonable amount of time in the tub. Every day of their lives these sixty millions of people, wherever they may happen to be, at home or abroad, parboil as one, taking baths hotter than any other human being—so hot that an average foreigner could probably not even hold his hand in the water.

At four o'clock in the afternoon, in almost any city, the poorer people, with metal soap-dish and small towel in hand, will be seen disappearing behind the blue cotton curtains which

KYŪSHŪ

flutter in long strips before the public baths, those clearing houses of gossip—one for men and one for women, side by side.

They enter a large matted hall, where the walls are lined with baskets for clothing. Undressing, they go to an adjoining room, where the smooth planed floor slopes to one corner for the better draining of the water, so carelessly and generously thrown about by Japanese bathers. Before entering a tub, they always lather and scour themselves with soap; then, dipping hot water from the tub in small buckets, they slush each other until every vestige of soap is washed away. Now thoroughly clean, they squat for an hour or so in the boiling water, up to their chins.

In the country districts which have not yet “eaten of the tree of international morals,” the public baths are still wooden tubs out in the open under the shade of a tree—behind a hedge—any convenient place where one may soak comfortably and gossip with passing neighbors. But even in these Gardens of Eden the serpent police are fast instilling knowledge that soon will make the baths less public and less sociable.

Should foolish prejudice lead a foreigner to prefer his bath before other guests have used

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

it, he must make certain of arriving at an inn before four o'clock, and if still more foolishly wishing to bathe alone, it must be, in small and out-of-the-way towns, by special request. Even then, though believing oneself alone, the bath door—without lock or bolt—will often slide open, and in will glide a maidservant to scrub your back.

“Why shut yourself up in a little room, forcibly keeping out your friends, to scrub alone?” And despite police regulations forbidding mixed bathing in “Old Japan,” a man clothed simply with candor and an absence of prejudice will stalk into a bathroom half full of women bathers, without its occurring to him—or to them—that the sight could possibly scandalize anybody.

And do not make the mistake of characterizing the Japanese as immodest because the human form is frequently naked.



“Once I saw a drawing by a famous artist, and I wondered at his peculiar fancy, believing the drawing to be one of imagination—certainly no such scenery existed under the heavens. But when I came to Yabakei I discovered that Na-

KYŪSHŪ

ture had sketched far more strangely than the artist.

"It was in the first year of Bunsei that I made my trip to Kyūshū, going at once to the northern province, where I tramped for days beside a river that had its origin in the Hiko-san Mountain. On the very first day I found the view over the hills to be most unusual, but the farther I tramped, the more extraordinary the scene became. There were mountain peaks leaning far over the river, as if wishing to embrace it; peaks that stood up straight, like bamboo shoots in the spring; peaks crashing to the ground as if smitten in battle; peaks obscured in mist, so that the clouds seemed to be holding pieces of rock, and the colors of these rocks were purple and blue.

"I went farther on, and the river that had been quietly following the contour of the mountain suddenly dashed down with the sound of thunder, spraying the rocks with snow; then it came to a level place, and the river changed to a jeweled lake where the shadow of the mountain was broken into pieces. Perhaps the water hated the mountain and did not want its shadow to be seen!"

So wrote the poet and traveler, Rai Sanyo;

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

and north from Beppu, in the valley of the Takaso River, there is a narrow ravine that was thickly crusted with lava several centuries ago when the crater, Tsurumi, without warning, sent skyrocketing of scoria more than five thousand feet into the air, tumbling in all directions a vast Niagara of liquid rock that piled up in cones and solidified. The lashing winds and rains of three hundred years have left behind fantastically formed rocks covered with bouquets of pine trees that grow almost upside down—exactly resembling the supposedly impossible Chinese sketches—without apparent base, having only summit fangs jutting into the nothingness of the air. They are absolutely unbelievable.



At Kurume the main road had been swept and purified by an army of coolies in preparation for the Princess Nagako, who, before her marriage to the Prince Regent, and according to immemorial custom, was visiting every noted spot in the Empire.

In this far-away island, where the shades of

KYŪSHŪ

the past linger longer than elsewhere, the blinds of every building along the expected line of march were tightly closed, for no one must look at royalty from above. But the streets were a sea of yellow faces kept in bounds by a dike of soldiers standing at attention.

For two hours this multitude patiently stood under a broiling sun just to see the Princess rush by in her automobile. She was received in reverent silence, with lowered eyes and profound bows, as she, also with downcast eyes, sat motionless in her car, her face showing neither graciousness nor arrogance, but only the complete lack of expression required by ancient etiquette.

"But what the above does the below will follow," is an old saying in Japan, and when the Prince Regent becomes Emperor, he certainly will change all this. All the Prince's ancestors commanded worshipful adoration by the sheer magic of distance, by keeping themselves lost in the purple of mythical clouds. Already His Imperial Highness, Hirohito, has forced the nation to see in him a human being, one of themselves, to be treated even as one of them. In all the 2,584 years since the founding of the

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

reigning House, this Prince is the first ruler to be greeted with the full-throated *Banzais* of his own people; the first to sail forth on "the four seas" to foreign countries; the first to ride on the streets unattended; the first to visit a public theater, and on the 26th of January, 1924, the first in all the court annals of the oldest reigning dynasty existent today, to make a true love match.

But despite these so-called radical tendencies, the royal wedding was celebrated with all the form of the old Shintō rites—as old as the days of the gods—concluding the ceremony with exchanging bowls of sacred *sake*, in which they plighted their troth, according to centuries-old custom. They took their vows before the Palace Shrine, where the spirits of one hundred and twenty-two royal predecessors witnessed the union and gave their blessing, according to devout Japanese belief.

Soon after the ceremony the bride and groom visited the Emperor and the Empress, at Nikkō, to report their marriage. A few days later they visited the mausoleum of the Emperor, their grandfather, to give the news to his spirit, and then journeyed to the Great Shrine of Ise, to announce the fact to the gods.

五

For three days a great column of smoke has hovered over the ever-active volcano, Aso-san. It looks as though the underground dragon were stoking up in preparation for making trouble, but no one in Kumamoto shows the least alarm, long familiarity having deadened all fears. "Why, this is the chosen moment to climb the mountain—so much the more exciting," everyone says, and so it proved.

The ascent starts at Tochinoki, the place of hot water, pulsating with springs direct from the glowing heart of the volcano, leads across the Black River, that tears through the ravine with deafening roar, through a dense forest, and up a steady climb of cultivated grassy country. Then begins a rocky trail leading into a wild twisted gorge, with geysers spitting red mud, where all vegetation ceases, not a single flower blooms, and no birds sing; only great waves of molten lava streaked by awful fires desolate the landscape. Up and up mounts the path to where the earth grumbles and shakes and great stones rattle down hill. Up and up to where the ground is distorted, as if put to torture in its

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

dying agony. Up and up to the very lip of the crater, whose mouth wide open, shows an incandescent throat glowing with unthinkable heat, its breath stifling and malignant with noisome stench.

The awesome hole is vomiting hot stones and ashes that fall all unheeded about a funeral party, kneeling in complete oblivion at the ragged edge of the pit, calmly fingering their rosaries as the wail of the priest's flute sounds above the chaos of noise. Yesterday a young man of Kumamoto, discouraged by failure to pass his school examinations, had thrown himself into this mass of fire.

六

This island of Kyūshū, which has played so many rôles in Japanese early history, also staged the arrival of the first Europeans to set foot on the Land of the Rising Sun. Three adventurers from Portugal, to whom Pope Alexander VI had made gift of all Asia, set forth to find it, and thanks to a storm which drove them far out of their course, they discovered Japan.

In their wake came Saint Francis Xavier, to be followed by other Jesuits, who preached

Christianity so eloquently that more than one million accepted the faith. But the zeal of the missionaries soon outran their discretion. Temples were pulled down and Buddhist images destroyed—an aggressive intolerance that not only excited secret enmity, but occasioned widespread plotting against the new religion; while the arrival of other religious orders, bitterly resented by the Jesuits, divided the Christians themselves into hostile camps.

Then, to make matters worse, the master of a Spanish vessel, detained for some infraction of law, sought to intimidate the Japanese officials by showing them a map of the world and the enormous expanse of country under the sway of Spain. Asked how one country could possibly acquire so much territory, the ship-owner replied, "By first sending priests into the country that Spain wishes to conquer. These missionaries then induce the people to embrace our religion, and when they have made sufficient progress, troops are sent, who, together with the converts, are able to work their will."

This crazy boast, reported by spies to the Shōgun, aroused him to such a pitch of anger that he immediately ordered the priests to be banished, and later caused those native Chris-

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

tians who would not recant to be punished as traitors.

Many pictures of the Christ-man were painted on cotton cloth and taken to every town and village infected with this disloyalty. A roll-call of the inhabitants was made and every man, woman, and child forced either to trample on the figure of Christ, or, by refusal, to become a self-convicted follower of the accursed faith.

Across the gulf facing Kumamoto, on the heights of fateful Shimabara, thirty-seven thousand Christians, after refusing to save themselves by spurning the cross, were put to death by the sword or taken over to Nagasaki, fastened into sacks, and hurled from the steep cliffs of Pappenburg into the sea.

And when all had been put to death or banished, the Shōgun commanded that no one from that time forth should leave the country, or even attempt to do so, on pain of torture, thus hermetically sealing Japan for over two hundred years.

The Dutch alone escaped expulsion, not being considered Christians, for, as Protestants, they had shown themselves openly hostile to Roman Catholicism. But they paid dearly for

KYŪSHŪ

the privilege, for as long as they remained in Japan, they were virtual prisoners on the little island of Deshima within the harbor of Nagasaki. For more than two centuries they and their descendants were the only connecting link with Europe.

At nightfall a saunter along this Shimabara Gulf will reveal a long line of pale red globes like colored soap-bubbles that, until the approach of dawn, drift up and down with the tide or else rise straight into the air, a perpendicular string of tiny ball lanterns. "Souls of the Christian martyrs," the Japanese call them—and how much more beautiful that interpretation than the scientific statement that this glow is a light emitted from some unknown animalculæ. And the Japanese may be right. Who knows?

XV

OVER THE SAN-INDŌ

Mukae-bi wa kado haku made no hikari kana.

Until the day begin, the fires to guide the spirits
back should always be kept in.

THE "San-indō" (In the Shadows), the long, winding road that trails between the stormy Japan Sea and great bulky mountains, snow-swept till late spring, starts at Shimono-seki, on the main island, Hondō, and directly opposite the island Kyūshū. It plunges at once on to a wild, picturesque shore where for two hundred miles or more the villages are as "Old Japan," and might be ten thousand, instead of two hundred, miles away from New Japan. There are as yet no railways, and as is so often the case with fisher folk the world over, the people are primitively superstitious.

At Hagi an epidemic is said to be raging, and above the doorways of most of the houses are paper impressions of children's hands, tacked there by mothers to ward off the dread disease. A man resplendent in scarlet uniform, with

OVER THE SAN-INDŌ

bugle and drum, is parading the streets advertising *Hankontan*—soul-recalling medicine—claimed to resurrect the dead.

The amount of patent medicine sold in Japan is simply amazing. Trained physicians there are in plenty, but the quack and the charlatan, because of cheapness, will long hold their own among the ignorant and credulous who have no wish to complicate old-fashioned troubles with new-fangled ideas.

Some of these nostrums are invitingly tempting: "Twice Eight Water, warranted to make all women look sixteen"; "Real Mother Medicine, giving the same protection a real mother would"; "Tortoise Life, the life of one thousand years"; "Wonderful Effect Pills. No matter how far gone, the patient will be refreshed. Hopeless cases benefited. If several packages are taken, a cure is guaranteed." This advertisement is nearly three centuries old.

二

In the *Book of Changes*, one of the four Chinese classics, it is written, "Nothing stands still in the world of men." But while the skeleton bridges beginning to span the valleys and the

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

railway stations fast taking form are very certain to bring immense changes to this unfrequented seacoast, the childlike faith of the inhabitants remains unchanged.

Yesterday two work trains collided, killing several men, and today several Buddhist priests are at this new railway station, chanting prayers. They are seeking to drive out the evil spirits which have caused the collision, exactly as the Greeks in the days before Christ expelled the spirits of accidents.

On All Saints' Day the spirits of the visiting dead receive here the same warm-hearted welcome given them everywhere in Japan in the days of long ago. All those who have crossed the dry bed of the river of souls on their weary journey to Nirvana, and who long for a sight of their loved ones, are believed to return home on this day.

Soon after dusk on the eve of the "Feast of Lanterns" every hillside cemetery gleams with twinkling lights. All relatives of the departed are burning incense and placing flowers and white lanterns beside each grave. Before the houses that have been visited by death, a beacon of fire sends heavenward spirals of smoke, to signal the soul spirits and to assure them of light

OVER THE SAN-INDŌ

on the way back to their old homes. Within, the houses are ablaze with light; as many as eighty and a hundred lanterns are burning brightly, while before the family altar has been placed the food best loved by the spirits.

In the further desire to render happy the ghostly visitors, people gather together in the open squares to form in great circles and dance the whole night through; singing quaint songs to the accompaniment of soft hand-clapping and the strains of drum and flute.

While we dance and sing,
Spirits of our dead return,
Guided while the lanterns burn.
In the house they will find
Rice and water left behind;
Peasants come and join the ring.

When the time arrives for the spirits to return to their new abode, fires are again lighted and lanterns gleam on the hillside, to show the road that leads through the sky back to the celestial paradise.

The sea is the pathway over which the spirits must return, and down to the water's edge are taken little boats filled with dainty food. Soon the waters glimmer with faint lights gliding out

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

into the open. On the white paper sails are written the spirit names of the dead, around about which circles the smoke of incense in faint blue lines.



A hundred or more of Hamada's school children are gaily marching along the road leading to the mountains, and as they pass, they wave and shout a happy *Banzai!*—hurrah for ten thousand years!

Once each year, all the pupils of every school, under the leadership of their teachers, make excursions to some historic or beauty spot. Ten-year-olds such as these can of course only visit the sights within a day's easy walking distance, and each child will carry his lunch of rice-balls and pickles wrapped in a colored handkerchief tied to his belt.

Older scholars, according to their grade, make a trip of two, three, and even five days, when their luggage will be a toothbrush, extra straw sandals, and a towel for the daily tub.

But whether for one day or for five, the purpose is the same—to teach and nourish a love of nature, respect for bravery, and reverence for

OVER THE SAN-INDŌ

the gods. They visit the birthplace of some hero, the field of a great battle, a celebrated shrine, or a noted bit of scenery.

By the irony of fate the poor always have more children than the rich, and this impoverished seacoast plainly shows the justice of Japan's other name, "Country of Countless Children." Two millions of children are born to Japan every year, and the voice of birth control is beginning to make itself heard throughout the land. It is receiving attention, however, only because of the increasing inability of the poor to give their offspring the passionately desired education, which in Japan, as in China, is the sole recognized passport to distinction and success. To be sure, every child, on reaching the age of six, must go to school for six years, and, tuition being free, over ninety-nine per cent of all the children attend school. But so much of the six years is wasted in military drills, the teaching of patriotism, and the learning of ideographs that the benefits are far less than should be expected.

Here at the primary school of Hamada, the yard is well filled with youngsters of not more than eight or ten years of age, drawn up in military formation, drilling under a petty officer of

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

the regular army. At the command "Forward march!" one sees reproduced the famous goose-step of Unter den Linden. And when it is realized that this is going on every day in twenty-five thousand primary schools with eight million pupils, as well as in sixteen thousand higher schools with ten million pupils, one begins to suspect that Japan's reserve military strength is much greater than is officially acknowledged.

Until after the World War, German influence was overwhelming in Japan. Prince Ito, who wrote the Constitution, studied in Germany, and when he returned home he sent hundreds of Japanese students to Germany to follow in his footsteps. They came back to fill the most important positions in the government, the army, and educational circles, passing on to their successors the German point of view.

The heart-breaking handicap to primary education is the use of the ideograph. Every ideograph is a word by itself, and has from one to six, and occasionally even a dozen, ways of pronunciation, as well as several different meanings, according to use.

The textbooks of the elementary grades are said to contain some twenty-six hundred charac-

ters. Admitting that the average change in pronunciation and meaning for each ideograph is only three instead of a possible much larger number, it makes nearly eight thousand words for a child to learn by heart before he can make intelligent use of his school-books.

An average daily newspaper carries perhaps six thousand characters, each having its three or more pronunciations and meanings. Obviously, those who go no further than the primary school are unable to read an ordinary newspaper fluently; while not even a middle school graduate can always master an editorial. It is not too much to say that a Japanese youth, on entering a university, is still studying to read his own language.

With an alphabet, grammar, syntax and vocabulary so radically different from their own, mastering a European language is really a stupendous task, and that so many Japanese speak English, French, and German as well as they do, argues much for their mental equipment.

One of the first subjects taught the youth of Japan is history, and on the first page of the first history book is to be read the familiar legend that by daily repetition takes firm root in these plastic minds:

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

"The ancestress of His Imperial Majesty is the Goddess Amaterasu, and her virtues are as widespread as the sun's rays. It is she whom we worship at the temple Daijin at Ise.

"Japan was first ruled by Prince Ninigi, the grandson of Amaterasu. Before he became Emperor, his grandmother said to him: 'This is the land where our descendants shall reign. Go and rule over it, and your power will endure as long as the stars in the heavens.' So was our Empire founded.

"And the grandmother gave to her grandson the mirror, the sword, and the precious jewel, which are our three sacred treasures.

"We call this period of our history 'The days of the Gods.'"

After the six years of compulsory education, there is the middle school of five years, a three years' high school course, and a university course of four years. From bottom to top, therefore, it takes theoretically eighteen years to graduate from a university. Practically, it takes much longer. There are not enough middle schools and still fewer high schools, making competitive examinations necessary, with hardly twenty per cent of the high school applicants admitted in any one year. The result is that

OVER THE SAN-INDŌ

the same entrance examinations are taken two, three, and even four times. While there are many excellent private schools, only those who pass through a government school are allowed to enter an Imperial university, while, strange to say, graduates of private schools are paid little more than half the salary given those coming from government schools.

For the average boy life is a series of competitive examinations, with his entire family deeply concerned in the yearly result. If he fails to pass, he not only disappoints, but shames them, a fearful and oftentimes unbearable strain, making physical breakdowns and suicides alarmingly frequent.



With the old established custom of bringing up the sexes separately, girls have comparatively little educational chance. After the middle schooling, their opportunities are relatively very limited, though mission and private schools are now doing more and more in that direction.

In the girls' schools special attention is given to deportment and manners, the course in etiquette being particularly stressed. How to bow

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

to a senior, a friend, or an inferior, and those bows so carefully graduated, are the most striking form of Japanese courtesy. Esteem is measured by repetition as well as by the depth of the bow. How to bring and serve tea, how to drink tea, how to walk into the house, and where to sit down in the house, are all parts of this course in etiquette.

Judged by occidental standards, the great blot on the social structure of Japan is her treatment of women. Men have been brought up without respect for them and without ideas of high virtue for themselves. Sexual morality has never been taught men. But in every school in the land girls and young women have always been taught the virtues of chastity and modesty, and it is admitted that Japanese married women are far more chaste than the average of their Western sisters. Women's status is still distinctly Asiatic, although the tremendous changes taking place in the big cities will eventually set new standards—more and more so as the country people come to look at such matters through the eyes of Europe and America.

With surprising modesty Japanese men and women persistently refuse to take a conspicuous place until repeatedly urged: "*Dozo o saki e!*"

OVER THE SAN-INDŌ

(Please to the honorable front!) All have been taught, "When thou art bidden to a feast, sit not down in the chief seat, lest happily a more honorable man than thou be bidden. But go and sit down in the lowest place. For whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased, and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted."

五

There is an Imperial edict, a sort of Japanese code of ethics, a copy of which is in every school in the Empire. This is studied as the basis of national morality. It is sacredly guarded and respected when on view, as if the Emperor himself were present in person.

This edict says in part:

"Ye, our subjects, be filial to your parents; affectionate to your brothers and sisters; as husbands and wives, be harmonious; as friends, true; bear yourselves in modesty and moderation; extend your benevolence to all; pursue learning and cultivate art, and thereby develop intellectual faculties and perfect moral powers; furthermore, advance public good and promote common interest; always respect the Constitution and observe the laws; should emergency arise, offer yourself courageously to the state and thus guard and maintain the prosperity of your Imperial throne, coeval with Heaven and Earth. So shall ye not only be

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

our good and faithful subjects, but render illustrious the best traditions of your forefathers. The way here set forth is indeed the teaching bequeathed by our Imperial Ancestors, to be observed alike by their Descendants, and the subjects, infallible for all ages and true in all places."

To the question, "What are the chief moral qualities?" any schoolboy would answer, "Loyalty and filial piety." And so strongly have these been emphasized that the homely virtues have been overshadowed.

An offense against the wishes of a superior is disloyal, so the Japanese argue, and in everyday life a servant will often lie rather than displease his master. An acquaintance will rarely commit the rudeness of declining an invitation to dinner, even though he may have no intention of coming. He feels that you would be pleased with an affirmative reply and refuses to disappoint you. The great moralist Motoöri asserted that propriety, or doing the right thing in the right way, is one of the leading virtues. Human beings,—meaning the Japanese,—having been produced by two creative deities, are naturally endowed with a knowledge of what they ought to do and what they ought to refrain from doing. It is unnecessary, therefore, for them to trouble their heads with systems of

morality. Were systems of morality necessary, men would be inferior to the beasts of the field, who are all endowed with the knowledge of what they ought to do, only in degrees inferior to man.

六

It is ebb tide. Clumsy-looking fishing junks manned by swarthy crews are approaching the shore. As a boat touches bottom, the men cast off their one garment of blue and leap overboard, dragging the boat to its night resting-place by a hempen hawser. Their captain chants a verse of some fishing song, to which the crew idly listen. At the chorus they all join in, pulling at the great rope as they sing. These two hundred nude "bronzes," with all the superstition of early days, violently object to being photographed, believing the picture to be a theft of their shadow.

The sea has quite retreated, and the dry beach swarms with old and young, gathering the spoils left behind. Far in shore have been driven rows of stakes to which great bunches of seaweed desperately cling. On peaceful days, swaying and moving with the waves, it

IN THE EARLY MORNING



OVER THE SAN-INDŌ

weaves, with the sun's rays as warp, a lovely fabric of green. But it is part of the spoils and, thirsting for home, it shrinks under the hot sun, making a queer crackling noise, as though remonstrating at being ripped away from its last refuge. It is laid out to cure on little squares of paper, later to be packed in packages of a dozen sheets, like mustard plasters, that find their way into shops that sell nothing but seaweed, one of the principal items on a Japanese menu.

For others than Japanese this menu is of a hopelessly monotonous sameness. Very alike, breakfast, lunch, and dinner, always beginning with tea and ending with tea: bean paste soup, with seaweed or bamboo shoots; fish raw or slightly warm, and eaten with vinegar; fish hashed and seasoned with saki; fish boiled; plain rice or rice wrapped in seaweed; rice covered with pickled or dried fish. Rice and fish, fish and rice, in endless combinations.

It is told that the god Ebisu in his boyhood was left to shift for himself on one of the outlying islands. One morning, while wandering disconsolate and hungry along the shore, he heard his mother's voice in the soft wind say, "Go a-fishing." So Ebisu went fishing and

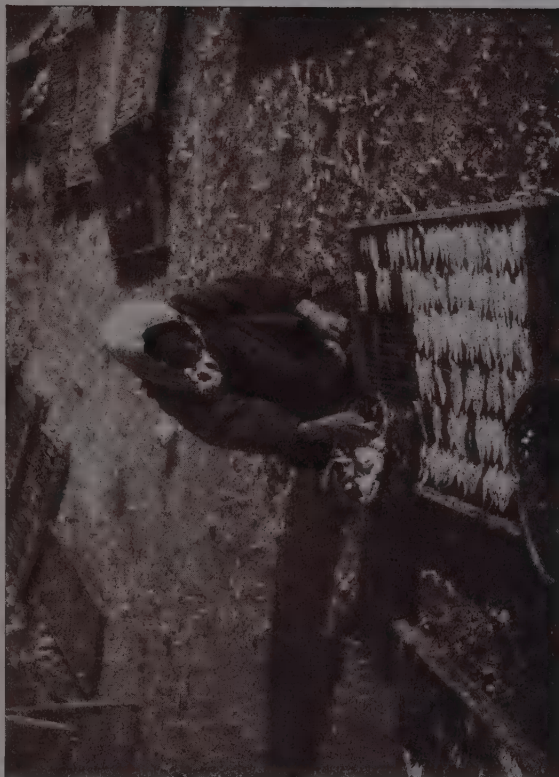
JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

grew fat, and those who followed him thrived likewise. But later on, tiring of a diet of raw fish alone, Ebisu crossed to the mainland, where he saw his fellow god Daikoku perched on two bags of rice, his face wreathed with an everlasting smile. He and Daikoku traded fish for rice and rice for fish, and ever since, at every Japanese meal, rice and fish have gone together.

Marvelous is the speed with which these rice and fish combinations are absorbed, noisily swept into the mouth with chopsticks, to be washed down apparently without chewing by copious swigs of soup or tea, making very understandable the national complaint, "*Hara itai!*" (I have a stomach ache!)

The tide has begun to set in, encroaching upon the beach from every side, driving the spoils hunters one by one towards land, until all disappear, their baskets full of booty. Slowly all the sand is swallowed, and the sea rolls up long lines of breakers, vainly seeking the sturdy pines that grip the shore-rocks wherever a handful of soil is visible. Truly the pine and not the cherry should symbolize Japan's tenaciousness of spirit.

Beyond, the waves are tossing white crests



SORTING FISH FOR MARKET

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

which the wind seizes and scatters into flying foam, spraying the very top of the island shrines at which the fisherman always stops, outward bound, to ask for blessing, and on the homeward journey to give thanks.

With Japan leading the world in the money value of fish caught each year, and with more men engaged in the industry than in all the other countries put together, it is to be expected that fish should be their principal food. But unlike the salmon fishers of Alaska, who "eat what they can and can what they can't," the Japanese use their surplus as fertilizer. When the fields are covered with thick layers of drying fish, to be turned over from time to time by rakes, one would think that all the inhabitants were haying, if the nose did not tell otherwise.

七

This holy province of Izumo, now slumbering in unruffled peace, will soon awaken and begin feverishly to make ready for the "God Month." For thirty days all the Shintō gods and goddesses, from every other part of Japan, will desert their own shrines and come to Izumo

OVER THE SAN-INDŌ

to confer with Ōnamuji—Master of the Great Land—who dwells in the Temple at Kizuki.

Now Ohokuni was the son of Susano-o, the brother of the Sun-goddess, Amaterasu, and had been made god-ruler of all the land along the Japan sea. So greatly did the country prosper under his rule that Amaterasu came to desire it for her grandson, whom she had selected as founder of the divine family which was to govern Japan forevermore. Accordingly, she sent an embassy from Heaven, demanding that Ōnamuji abdicate, to which finally he consented upon the understanding that a temple should be built for his worship.

This was done, and, to pacify him further, Ōnamuji was appointed dictator over all the other deities living on earth. On learning of his appointment, he issued an edict commanding all the gods in Japan to assemble together at Kizuki for the discussion of all sorts of human affairs, from questions of state to earthly love; and this yearly conference, so the people believe, continues to this very day.

But each year Ōnamuji must have sadder and still sadder news to report to his fellow deities. Of the two hundred and fifty temples erected from time to time in his personal honor, there

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

remains, with one exception, little but a few mossy ruins. And the three thousand wooden shrines that await the yearly coming of the gods look so dilapidated in their lonely sea-pebble courts as to resemble shipwrecks at low tide.

Only the great shrine, built according to the promise of Amaterasu in the gray little town of Kizuki, is unchanged. In an atmosphere of holiness so sadly lacking at Ise, this oldest existent temple of ancestral culture stands in all its pristine freshness at the end of a magnificent avenue of "One Thousand Pines." In their tottering old age many of the trees have been lovingly propped up on crutches. Within the temple's Holy of Holies is the *Shintai*, meaning "God's body," which no living man has ever looked upon.

Every morning before the sun rises over the Eastern horizon pure fire is kindled with the same fire-drill as was used by the gods when they drilled fire to cook the celestial banquet. And in the ceremony of purification which follows, snowy-robed and scarlet-skirted priestesses dance the same dance that thousands of years ago was given before the cave in which sulked the Sun-goddess. Nothing is changed.

OVER THE SAN-INDŌ



Very properly, Matsue, the center of this holy province, is one of those ageless cities, unchanged and unchanging. Again and again swept by fire, it has been rebuilt and built again, just as it was in the beginning. And still aloof from the bustle of the world, it dreams on as of old.

An ideal home this for a brooding man of letters, such as Lafcadio Hearn, who clothed the soul of Nippon in literary symbols which the West could understand.

It was along the narrow winding street of temples—the street inhabited by the gods—that Hearn so often wandered at nightfall. Down the pathway shaded by overarching trees, into the splendor of the soft blue night that comes before complete darkness, he would daily stroll with his young wife.

In the lukewarm air there was a mingling of familiar odors,—the heavy breath of incense, the scent of *sake*, the smell of sea, and the smoke of fires which curled above the roofs where the village people were preparing their evening meals.

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

Past the sanctuary of the Physician of Souls, enshrined at the top of six hundred and forty steps, they went; past the altars sacred to the memory of the father and mother of gods and men; past the temple of the God of Love, where into the courtyard's quiet pool they threw each other's names wrapped about a coin for luck.

Through the half-open temple doorways could be seen the gleam of gilding, resplendent even in the soft gloom, and, with eyes accustomed to the obscurity, the altars of Buddha, heavy with strange ornaments of bronze, cut like a silhouette against the vague gray light.

Farther along, behind the park of the chateau that stands by the side of Kitabori River, is the house which was the scene of Hearn's happiest hours. There he lived with his young wife, Setsu Koizumi, whose family belonged to the ancient military caste of samurai ruined by the tragedy of the Revolution, and, like so many others in that province, living in abject poverty.

To the samurai the Mikado was too sacred to come in personal touch with the ordinary affairs of the Empire, and they fought to uphold the power of the Shōgun, who acted as his intermediary. Setsu's father held the office

OVER THE SAN-INDŌ

of Governor under the Shōgun, and with the loss of the cause for which he and his friends were fighting, he was taken prisoner, to be kept in confinement for several years. On learning this news, Setsu's mother, with her own hand, set fire to their castle home and from the mountain side calmly watched it burn to the ground, that it might not fall into the enemy's hands. Like all aristocrats of feudal times, she had been brought up in the rigid samurai school which, in order that she may learn to fight valiantly life's battles, teaches a woman to act like the lioness who pushes her young over a cliff and watches them slowly climb back from the valley, without one sign of pity, though her heart is breaking for them.

As many a girl in those days, despite position and education, was obliged from filial devotion to accept a life of which even the thought was worse than death, Setsu's parents readily agreed to their daughter's going to live with the "barbarian" who had generously offered to care not only for the daughter but for the entire family as well.

These two emptied the three cups of wine three times, that according to Japanese law tied them together; and to the end of Hearn's life

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

Setsu Koizumi remained for him the living image of exotic Japan.

Now, years after his death, before the spirit tablet in his old workroom there still burns an altar lamp, and from the table of offerings comes the odor of incense mingled with the sweet perfume of flowers. Every evening the children and their mother come to this room and bow down before the shrine, wishing the invisible father good-night. And, even as Hearn himself once wrote of the spirits of the dead, a shadow seems to hover in the reflection of the altar lamp, and who can say what is the cause of the flickering of the light?

九

The Matsue Inn looks out on the blue lagoon of Shinjuko, a mountain-girdled lake, whose calm waters reflect the thousand little balconies that circle its borders. All day long little steamers angrily puff to and fro, while over the long, curving bridge, whose arch symbolizes the rainbow bridge of heaven, clatters an endless process of *geta*-shod feet.

Now in the darkness of night all is still, and over the heavenly arch steals a ghostly proces-

OVER THE SAN-INDŌ

sion on its way to the crematory up the mountain-side. The coffin, plainly outlined by the lights carried by attendants surrounding it, is of pure white wood in almost exact imitation of a temple. Within kneels a body in the Buddhist attitude of prayer. In the van is carried a dragon's head with long streamers to scare away the devil. Behind trails a cortège of hired mourners, from whose lips comes a low, wailing dirge that rises and falls in rhythmic anguish. Bringing up the rear are many white-robed priests in whose hands gleam black paper lanterns bearing weird-looking ideographs. It is ghostly indeed.

But saturated as Japan is with symbolism, the temple service is idealistically beautiful. At the end there is the rendition of the *sutras* for the dead, in sorrowing antiphonal, and then the doors of six bird-cages are swung wide open and the birds eagerly fly away, emblematic of the freedom of the soul.

XVI

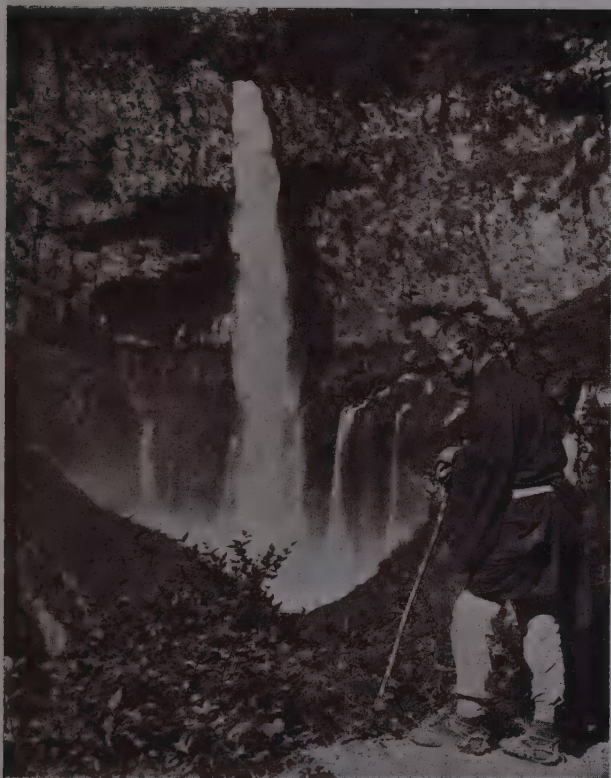
NIKKŌ

Nikkō wo mihai uchi wa kekko to iu na.

Until Nikkō is seen you have no right to
the use of the word "splendid."

FROM the upper end of the scattered, picturesque village of Nikkō, comes the rollicksome roar of foaming water, filling the air with fairy music. The "Mountains of the Sun's Brightness,"—such is the meaning of Nikkō,—half encircling the town, are gashed with ravines down which pour score upon score of feathery cascades, adding their silvery mite to the flood that comes tumbling from the higher reaches, where beautiful Lake Chūzenji drowns in endless serenity.

A sacred bridge of red lacquer spans the raging stream. Its name, from its origin, signifies "farewell to the world." It is never used except for the funeral cortège of a descendant of the Tokugawa Shōguns whose tombs crown the mountain, and one day in each year when it is open to pilgrims.



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KEGON WATERFALL AT NIKKŌ

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

This is the famous bridge erected to commemorate the legend of Shōdō Shōnin, who, while making a pilgrimage to these holy mountains, found his way barred by an impassable torrent. Falling upon his knees, he prayed long and fervently, whereupon there appeared on the opposite bank a divine being who silently flung across the river two green and blue snakes. In an instant a bridge like a rainbow was seen to span the waters; but as soon as the saint had crossed, both the snake-bridge and the god vanished.

Looking up the gorge from the neighboring wooden bridge, built for the feet of the vulgar, to where the river boils through the enfolding hills, a long line of age-worn Buddhas may be seen sitting in ancient silence along the bank, brooding on the instability of worldly things. Over the round balloons of their stomachs fall long rosaries, the gifts of devotees whose supplications have met with favorable response.

二

Early in the seventeenth century, Japan's greatest Shōgun, Tokugawa Iéyasu died, and his body, by his own command, was laid to rest in

NIKKŌ

the midst of the virgin forest of one of Nikkō's sacred mountains. When later, Iémitsu, who had inherited his grandfather's wonderful administrative ability, became Shōgun, he called together the great nobles of the country and informed them that it would be their privilege to erect a commemorative mausoleum to Iéyasu. "Thus," said Iémitsu to himself, "not only will the glory of the Tokugawas be perpetuated, but the impoverished nobles, unable to engage again in petty civil wars, will turn to the encouragement of art and this will lead to continued peace.

So it happened that, one by one, the most magnificent temples and shrines in all Japan arose upon the slopes of Nikkō—each noble striving to outdo the other in the use of costly woods, rare carvings and rows of expensive lanterns of stone or bronze, to serve as guide posts on the journey to the unknown land.

There was one *daimyō*, however, who was too poor to compete with his fellows. Anxious to honor the dead and enhance the fame of his country, he offered, instead of lanterns, to plant young trees along both sides of the broad avenue leading up to the shrines.

Over three hundred years have now passed,

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

and Time, that wisest of critics, has rendered final judgment. Endowed with more strength than man and all his works, the one-time sapling trees have become giants, proudly rearing their tufted heads towards heaven; soaring far above the heights of puny man, to greet one another in the sky with branches and beckoning leaves. The approach to the temples is through a twenty-mile tunnel of everlasting green—the gift of that poor man. And there, in the heart of the dark and massive groves, rather than in the temples themselves, is found a lasting peace—that splendid peace that comes when the fear of man is strangled by the presence of a visible God who sees all, hears all.



Never were glories of art revealed with more virginal reserve than here. Each temple is veiled like some deep mystery behind the cryptomerias which sweep up to where the mountains meet the sky. Stone steps slowly, meditatively, ascend the slopes to immense heavily-roofed gates cunningly wrought with intricate carvings. That very visit gives the feeling of discovery. The inexhaustible rich-

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

ness of the gate Yōmei Mon, the masterpiece of Jingoro, is so fascinating that one often lingers there till day wanes. Hence its native name, *Higurashi-no-mon*—Twilight Gate. Strangely enough, its perfection is purposely rendered imperfect. The Japanese superstitiously destroy harmony in order to dispel bad luck. One panel on a column of this gateway has been placed upside down, that the beauty of the gate will not excite the jealousy of the gods.

Behind stands a temple which is a jewel of lacquer and gold. A lavish blending of reds and whites, blacks and bronzes—but without the least tawdriness. Time has blurred and blended these splendors with the landscape, making a wonderful harmony of foliage, of sloping roof, of golden door, backed by the gloom of mighty trees and the shadows of mountains.

From within the temple comes the chant of priests telling their beads in nasal tones. Then the tinkle of coin offerings and the soft clapping of hands. Into the meeting-room of the souls of the *daimyōs* and samurai who died for the great Shōguns, the faithful throw prayers and petitions written on rice paper. Here every

night the warrior ghosts gather together. Perhaps they spare time to read these naïve petitions before returning to their Kingdom of Dreams at the first sound of morning; and if they do, their death-dulled eyes will surely fill with understanding tears.



In one of the silent, shadowy corners of Nikkō there is a convent where a little band of Sisters devote their lives to the outcast girls of Japan. The good they do shows in them. The peace of God is in the calm beauty of their faces. Buddhists and Christians alike do them honor. It was one of their former charges, a pupil who had later studied in America, who wrote upon request a letter regarding women in Japan from which we are privileged to quote here.

“Dear Sister Beatrice is so anxious to help you, and seems to think that because I spent some years in America, I shall best be able to answer your many questions about women, but being a woman, I know so much about them that I shall find it difficult to write of them.



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GATE OF YŌMEI MON, NIKKŌ TEMPLE

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

"No, there is no doubt that the position of Japanese women is fast changing, though as yet the great masses are far from being fully aroused. To awaken them completely would be a very simple matter if only men would consent; but men, the framers of laws that set the moral standards, think only of themselves. These 'rulers' still cling to the delusion that women are frail creatures, and they have not the heart to see them undertake studies and responsibilities which rightfully belong to the sterner sex. They glow with a grandmotherly kindness that prescribes just what should be woman's education and work. To do anything a woman is not supposed to do is to earn the honorable prefix 'new,' which, as when applied to one of our celebrated color-prints, lessens the market-value.

"One of my women friends was almost forced to leave Nikkō and go to Tōkyō, though she intensely loved nature and the quiet of our country life. Her neighbors and friends have stared at her and circulated many unkind stories. That a rich, pretty woman of five and twenty should go without a husband when she could have one for the asking, was beyond the comprehension of the country people. She

must have had a frightful disappointment in love, or else have a horrible disease suspected by none: perhaps cursed with leper or Eta blood or some such similar disgrace!

"Centuries ago Buddhism, supported by Confucianism, laid its blighting hand upon the womanhood of Japan, teaching that woman was the source of all evil. Those old Eastern moralists appreciated the strong influence which the fair sex have ever wielded over man, and in their fear they made her entirely subordinate to man. The less freedom, the less powerful her wiles.

"In those early days men were taught that in preparing themselves for warfare there must be complete detachment from worldly affection. Love was inconsistent with valor. This old teaching found its direct echo as recently as in the Russian-Japanese War, when a well-known general, on leaving for the front, divorced his wife, to whom he was extremely devoted. His sole reason was that as he had neither father nor mother, brother nor sister, that was the only way to dedicate himself completely to the service of his country. The wife submitted without flinching, and one cannot but wonder which of the two made the more vital sacrifice.

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

"In Japan marriage is not a matter of love, but a duty to the sacred dead and the unborn future. Of course, love matches do occasionally take place as the result of higher education and of marriages late in life; but so long as the Japanese live not as individuals but as families, marriage will remain more a public duty than a private affair.

"With us, marriage is of two kinds: becoming a wife and becoming a husband. A woman to become a wife is one thing, and to get a husband quite another. An only son must take a wife; he cannot be adopted by another family, and his wife, as in the West, with marriage changes her name to that of his forefathers. But, on the other hand, an only daughter is in duty bound to take a husband who shall inherit her family name and perpetuate it; so when Mr. A becomes the husband of such a Miss B, he will henceforth be known as Mr. B, relinquishing the name A forever.

"*Greater Learning*, a book for women, written by the famous moralist, Ekken, was for centuries looked upon as the one indispensable article in every bride's trousseau. It taught the three obediences—obedience to their parents when young; obedience to their husbands when

married; obedience to their own male children when old. The whole system of this teaching might be said to be founded upon the spirit of unselfishness—humility, self-sacrifice, forbearance, and complete submission being its four cornerstones. While today this book is read by comparatively few, its influence is still strongly felt, and all the schoolbooks for girls are more or less imbued with its doctrine.

“The fourth volume of ‘Ethics,’ compiled by the Department of Education and now used in all the higher schools throughout the country, opens by saying:

“‘It being the woman’s lot in general to marry, help her husband, bring up her children, and attend to the housekeeping, she should aspire to become first a good wife, and next a wise mother.

“‘A woman may assume a new name by marrying into another’s family, or she may remain under her parental roof and take a husband. In either case she should be a devoted wife and a good housekeeper.

“‘Man and woman, being differently constituted, are distinct in their mentality. Man is for out-of-doors and woman for indoors, and each is complementary to the other.

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

“‘It is the everyday duty of the wife to welcome her husband with a gentle look and kind words when he returns home in the evening, fatigued with the day’s work. He must be cheered up, so that he may go out refreshed to his duties next morning.

“‘Obedience to the husband is what is expected of a wife as a matter of course, but in case he should behave in a way that might hurt his reputation or that of the good name of his family, he should be remonstrated with quietly. Jealousy or angry words should always be avoided.

“‘All these points should always be kept in mind by young girls.’

“A girl at home seldom hears her mother use anything but the polite language addressed to a superior when speaking to her husband, while the father will often reply brusquely as to an inferior; but the woman has been trained to accept her position uncomplainingly. In girlhood she was taught to give place to her brother even when she was his senior, or, as a legitimate child, to make way for a natural child if he were a boy and recognized by his father. A husband cannot be divorced for intimacy with another woman, unless that woman

herself be married and her husband willing to prosecute in court of law; though a wife, having been sought in marriage for the purpose of posterity, can be divorced simply for not bearing children.

"As divorce is generally a matter of agreement and not of law, the number of divorces each year is large. Japan, however, consoles herself with the feeling that her many divorces are morally better than the economic or religious impossibility of divorce in some Western lands.

"Though these traditional tendencies are too deeply ingrained to be quickly uprooted, the tide of Westernism is surging over our big cities. Could you penetrate behind the home screens of some of our families, you would find many a Xantippe and learn that a Japanese, very stiff and formal to his wife before a third party, is often devoted to her at home.

"Then the so-called 'feminist' movement is bearing fruit. Women are beginning to rebel publicly against their lot and the one-sided arrangement of the laws, though the present cry for woman-suffrage is to me absurd in a land where even man-suffrage is not yet completely realized.

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

"You ask about our women's native dress. Is that not somewhat difficult for a man to understand? However, I will do my best:

"The kimono—*ki*, meaning 'to put on' and *mono*, 'thing'—is the dress, using the word in its Western sense. For married women of position and refinement this kimono is invariably of sober gray, dark blue, or black, while for the unmarried woman any color may be used, though blue is today's fashion. One and all, however, are guiltless of those heavily-padded gold-embroidered dragons or flowers that trail nonchalantly up and down the back, which in America is called Japanese dress. It might be a shock to you to realize that Japan believes display rather than refinement finds a readier sale in America.

"For all seasons, year in and year out, the cut and shape of the kimono are practically the same. Variety is found only in material and pattern. When a Japanese woman decides that she will have a new kimono, it is either because she feels that some social duty requires it, or because hers is not a fashionable color, or just because she femininely decides that she wants one. She simply buys some ten yards of eighteen-inch-wide white silk. The only ques-

tion to decide is one of weight, silk being sold by weight. The heavier it is, the more expensive. This silk is taken to the dyer together with a design of her crest, five of which must appear on all formal dress—one on the back, two on the chest, and one on each sleeve. The dyer gives her the color of her choice.

"The most important article of our wardrobe is the sash or *obi* of satin or brocade, which holds the kimono together. It is upon her *obi* that a woman prides herself, and it is by her *obi* that her taste is judged—by other women. This, therefore, calls for the most careful selection, and from two hundred to two thousand *yen* (one hundred to one thousand dollars) is lavished upon these four-yard-long sashes. They are wound twice about the waist, and the ends are tied at the back in a huge bow. Tightly drawn as it must be, to keep the kimono securely in place, it impedes all freedom of movement and is far more confining than the old-fashioned corset of an American woman. I am told that the *obi* was originally adopted as tending to keep women at home.

"When 'dressed up,' we wear two or three of these kimonos; one over the other, the inner ones having plain white silk collars that show

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

in the V neck. In warm weather the same effect is attained by sewing these extra collars to the outside kimono.

“Underwear is a simple matter. Just a piece of cloth wrapped about the hips, one long petticoat reaching to the feet, and a chemise that comes to the waist. We wear no stockings, but instead, a combination sock and slipper with a separate compartment for the great toe. These are called *tabi* and reach to the ankle. When on the street, sandals of fine straw, or high wooden clogs—*geta*—are put on over the *tabi*. At restaurants, theaters, and department stores, these sandals and clogs are quickly slipped off and checked—just as with you your hat and coat are checked.

“Masculine Japan has always opposed any change in women’s costumes, despite the feminists who tell men that they at least might mind their own business. But since the earthquake, with its staggering economic blow, the traditional costume is really beginning to be threatened, and even the men who most valiantly stood out for it are yielding to the argument that foreign dress is much cheaper. On the streets of conservative Nikkō more foreign clothes than ever before are now seen.

"I have tried to imagine that you and I were sitting on our knees talking together, and were traveling over one another's minds, and I hoped in my desire to give the wanted information to see your gracious face flower like the land when the seasonal rain comes to awaken it. But alas, I fear I have vainly spent all the beautiful moonlight of the first half of this night in foolish talk. It is a great shame on my part not to have words of greater wisdom to offer."

五

Sometime about the middle of July, 1923, a number of world-famed seismologists met together in the city of Tōkyō, Japan—that most shaken of all earthquake zones—to study and discuss the phenomena which the past year had brought to their store of knowledge.

Day by day the newspapers printed a synopsis of their deliberations, and to the Japanese, who from time immemorial have lived and died, worked and played, on islands always aquiver, who know, as certainly as they know that night follows day, that every ten years or so an earthquake disaster will overtake them

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

in one place or another, the opinions of these scientists were of vital moment, to be followed with feverish anxiety. Great, therefore, was the rejoicing when Fusakichi Omori, the foremost earthquake specialist in the world, gave out for publication that, as earthquakes occur only under well-defined conditions where geological flaws are known to exist, and are resultantly able to be foretold with a fair degree of accuracy, the people of Tōkyō might be free from all fear for many years to come.

Just six weeks later, September 1, 1923, the very second the noonday cannon roared above the bastion of the Imperial Palace, as though it were the last trumpet sounding the Day of Judgment, the earth began to roll in waves six and eight feet high, like a succession of fast-moving ocean swells. Buildings, lurching drunkenly from side to side, were battered into splinters as if by a gigantic flail, and falling into this choppy sea, sank out of sight in the flash of an eye. So wrote my Japanese friend and interpreter even as the first chapter in this book was being completed.

"I happened," he goes on to say, "to be on the second floor of the public library in Hibiya

Park, making some researches for you, when the building began to shake. *Jishin! Jishin!* (earthquake) yelled everyone, and I ducked underneath a table in undignified yet comparatively safe retreat from the rain of plaster that came pattering down with the rapid fire of a machine-gun.

"As the first shock died away, I dashed out of doors into a tiny wood of bamboo bushes, claimed to be safe, for bamboo roots are so thickly spread over the ground as to prevent the earth from cracking. There I remained for hours. It was a bit of hell on earth. The ground heaved and opened all about us. 'Terra firma' no longer existed. Our little oasis of safety was like a wrecked boat tossing up and down in an angry ocean. And for days the earth never ceased to shudder in a delirium of agony. Incredible as it may seem, within the next two weeks there were officially no less than 1,300 distinct shocks.

"The volcano fate of Pompeii was a mere incident compared with the avalanche of horror which overwhelmed us. Herculaneum, Messina, San Francisco, were only skirmishes when contrasted with this battle between man and nature. All the fiends of hell apparently were

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

let loose against us. Even the winds rebelled and blew a typhoon gale that fanned the fires which soon broke out in every street, alley, and byway.

“The bursting of gas pipes, the overturning of countless oil stoves and *hibachis*—the first quake came just at luncheon time—started the ugly thing that within an hour wrapped the whole city in red, devouring sheets of flame. Everyone seemed dazed, indifferent as to their own fate, and callous to the miseries of those about them. They stared numbly at the burning doors of houses from whence came mad shrieks for aid. Only the mothers, over ground that yawned in deep fissures several feet wide, like broken ice floes in a river, crept on hands and knees from floe to floe towards home. There they vainly clawed at the piles of wreckage under which they could hear their children crying. Hopelessly they kept at their task until the flames mercilessly swallowed up all before them.

“As supports were sapped by fire, buildings fell in heaps, and then, as if by some malevolent magic, the entire city was blotted out by dust thicker than the thickest fog,—dull brown and black, shot with sulphur, sinister and menacing.

Heedless of the raging inferno about them, many knelt in prayer. Thousands fled to the city bridges. But the bridges themselves began to burn and fall into the canals, where the water was at fever heat, and the people boiled to death.

"Other thousands under the guidance of the police staggered towards the open spaces. In one ward no less than thirty thousand people took refuge within a great athletic field. But there too the flames hemmed them in, and all were roasted alive. So great was the throng that the twisted and contorted bodies had not been able even to fall to the ground. They stood, packed together, the dead rubbing elbows with the dead.

"Among these scorched thousands was discovered the body of the Chief of Police, who had instructed his men to lead the refugees into this fire trap. Accepting his responsibility, he had joined them as soon as the burning tongue of fire had licked up its victims. There, true to type, he sought the traditional death, committing harakiri.

"Another Japanese characteristic showed itself plainly—the old stoicism, *shikataganai*, 'It can't be helped.' As you know, we Japanese are

JAPAN IN SILHOUETTE

exceedingly proud and seek to conceal our sufferings.

"And still another incident and at this you will probably smile. It is reported that as the Kyōto express was approaching Yokohama, the roadbed was suddenly twisted as if by some giant hand and the train was derailed. Into each car there entered a guard, his face expressionless as though carved from stone, who politely doffed his hat and informed the terrified passengers that he was sorry, but 'the train will proceed no farther!'

"Four nights I slept in Shiba Park, which was packed with terrified refugees. All the time the earth beneath my body never ceased to tremble and the city was wrapped in the fiery redness of Judgment Day. But the moon appeared in the sky just as of old and the stars played their nightly pantomime, Orion, the pilgrim of Heaven, even smiling more brightly than ever. God, how can such things be!"

六

And here our pilgrimage ends. By some freak of fortune most of the places described in this book are almost intact. There are, to

be sure, no more cherry trees in Hibiya Park. Nothing but smoke-blackened trunks that like so many ghosts mournfully gaze over the plain of ashes surrounding them. The Imperial Hotel across the way was untouched, while the Imperial theater close by now resembled a battered pasteboard box; stripped of one wall, its insides were almost indecently exposed.

For the most part, however, the severest punishment was inflicted upon the congested quarters of the poor. Vast areas were there laid waste. More than two hundred thousand native houses were converted into smoldering charcoal. Still, as the Mayor of Tōkyō is reported to have said, "Tragedy is often the womb in which blessings are conceived," and this cataclysm offers the opportunity to build a far better and greater Tōkyō.

And so, our journey over, we bid you *Sayōnara!* May you grow as old as the pine and as strong as the bamboo; may the storks make nests in your chimneys, and may the turtle crawl over your floor. *Sayōnara!*



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